

# CHRISTIAN ETHICS TODAY

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*"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord'"* Isaiah 40:3; John 1:23

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# An Open Letter to our Readers

Our readers have been almost unanimous in their praise of *Christian Ethics Today*. Many write that it is the best Journal they read (see **We've Got Mail** inside). We still have a number asking common questions, which I will try to answer:

1. *How much does it cost to send the Journal?* About \$8,000 to \$10,000 per issue, or about \$60,000 per year—which averages about \$25-30 per subscriber.

2. *How can the Journal be sent free of charge?* From 1995 until last summer, when the Center for Christian Ethics (of which the Journal was a part) was established at Baylor, over \$40,000 per year came from a few large entities. The rest, \$10,000-15,000 came from individual readers. These gifts provided the Journal to over 2500 readers.

3. *What happened when the Center transferred to Baylor?* The large gifts of about \$40,000 went with the Center, which was the plan from the beginning. However, the Board of Directors wanted to continue *Christian Ethics Today* (which the Center at Baylor did not plan to do). In June, 2001, \$35,000 was provided by the disbanding Board to keep the Journal alive through 2000.

4. *How are we doing financially?* Now that the Journal is totally independent, our only source of income is from our readers and any who want to support our Mission and Purposes (see *Back Page Statement*). Here is a summary of our financial support:

**June-December, 2000:**

64 Individual Gifts: \$8387  
Sale of Back Issues: \$2448  
TOTAL: \$10,835

**January-August, 2001:**

1 Special Gift \$25,000\*

\*A one-time gift to help us achieve financial stability in 2001

85 Individual Gifts \$10,139

5. *What do these figures mean?* Certain conclusions seem obvious:

- *More individual contributors are needed.* Our present subscribers number over 2800 persons—only about 150 of them contribute annually, most about \$30.
- *Annual total contributions by readers (\$20,000)*

*will provide only two issues.*

- *An additional \$40,000 is needed annually to provide six issues per year.* Our Board recently met to discuss these realities and various options:
  - A. Increase the number and amount of contributions from readers.
  - B. Continue to seek larger gifts from supporters of the Journal.
  - C. Begin the search for Endowment Gifts—a corpus of \$500,000 is needed.

Why am I sharing this with you, the reader? Because YOU are the key to our future. In order to continue publishing the Journal, we need your help. Would you consider:

1. Making a minimum contribution of \$30 annually—the cost of the Journal you read.
2. Increasing by two or threefold what you now give, so that others may read the Journal. (We are providing CET free of charge to students in our colleges and seminaries, to faculty members, to pastors, and recently, to 100 Directors of Missions)
3. Soliciting support from people you know who could make a major investment.
4. Identifying persons, foundations, and other entities who could provide endowments that would sustain us across the year. Recently a supporter assigned \$25,000 in the Baptist Foundation to provide \$2500 per year for the next ten years. This is the first of many endowments that we hope will follow.

As you know, the Editor operates out of his home and works diligently to maintain the excellence of the Journal, while controlling expenses. Because of many dedicated people who help us, we have achieved maximum quality for a minimum of expense. At the moment we have \$11,600 in our account and we anticipate another \$6,000 in 2001 contributions, *enough to publish the two remaining issues this year.*

My message is the one Foy printed in every issue. Your financial support is “greatly needed, urgently solicited, and genuinely appreciated.” More than ever before, this is true. Thanks for all you do to spread the words of *Christian Ethics Today*. ■ JET

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# Christian Spirituality: Inward Piety or Outward Practice?

By Ralph C. Wood,

University Professor at Baylor University

**Editor's Note:** Originally delivered at the International Symposium on Evangelical Theology and Christian Spirituality at Beeson Divinity School October 2-4, 2000, the essay will be part of a forthcoming volume, *For All the Saints: Christian Spirituality and Evangelical Theology*, edited by Timothy George and Alistor McGrath, published by Westminster/John Knox Press, 2002.

It's a delight to return to the Samford campus after two year's absence and in fond remembrance of the very happy year that Suzanne and I spent here in 1997-98. It's also a pleasure to receive this invitation from a friend of nearly three decades, Dean Timothy George. And it's a special privilege to respond to a scholar whose work I have admired for many years, Professor Alister McGrath of Oxford University, in his plenary address today on "Loving God with Heart and Mind: The Theological Foundations of Spirituality."

Unlike other failed preachers who've found no one willing to lay the hands of ordination on them, I have only two points to make. Both of them operate on the assumption that Christian spirituality is outward no less than inward: that the Christian life consists of outward habits and practices that form our inward character into the image of Christ. My model, in this regard as in so many others, is a Baptist preacher named Warren Carr. He calls himself a "Flip Wilson Christian." Wilson was a brilliant black comedian of the 1960s and 70s who, among other roles, acted as pastor of "The Church of What's Happening Now." Warren Carr has adopted Flip Wilson's salutary motto as his own: "What you see is what you get." My chief thesis, therefore, is that we are not secret "inner Christians" who have hidden "spiritual selves." We are the outward and public persons, I will argue, who have been formed into the image of Christ by the visible and audible practices of the Church.

I want first to question Professor McGrath's contention that spirituality consists in the heart-felt *application* of Christian truth to the inner life of faith. I will insist, by contrast, that we can never assume that we know the Gospel in advance, nor that we need only to put it into practice—whether outwardly in social gospel fashion, or inwardly in pietistic devotion. I will maintain, on the contrary, that the Gospel is something not yet fully known, and thus that it requires our ever-fresh rediscovery and conformity to it. In the second case, I will propose that our crying need is not so much for a renewed emphasis on *meditation*, as Professor McGrath claims, but rather on *theological preaching and authentic worship*. It is the poverty of our preaching and our worship that has made so many of our people into mere sucklings of spiri-

tual milk and thus perpetual "children in Christ."

## I.

Professor McGrath asserts that we must accept the term "spirituality" because it has won nearly unanimous endorsement in our time. I fear, on the contrary, that the word has become unredeemably vague and monstrous. It is an abstract noun so devoid of theological content that it can be attached to almost any modifying phrase. My graduate student assistant made a Web-search for the word "spirituality" and got 10,000 responses. Even when he added the genitive "of," there were still several hundred sites. Here are but a few of the many "spiritualities" advertised on the Internet. I challenge anyone to specify what they might mean: the spirituality of unity, the spirituality of work, the spirituality of simplicity, the spirituality of intimacy, the spirituality of non-violence, the spirituality of the body, the spirituality of imperfection, the spirituality of indigenous cultures, the spirituality of food, the spirituality of letting go, the spirituality of the feminine, the spirituality of the good herb, the spirituality of aging, the spirituality of the religious educator, and—most revealing of all—the spirituality of wildness. This last "spirituality" is described as follows: "religion that is lived, felt, and experienced—rather than simply believed—real and ecstatic and visceral [religion]. Wicca, neopaganism, ecospirituality, shamanism, totemism, shapeshifting, therianthropy, nature magic, animal and plant lore, and earth-based spirituality of all kinds." Surely the one thing missing from this sorry litany is the spirituality of abortion. No wonder that the late president of Wake Forest University, James Ralph Scales, used to say that, whenever he heard the word "spirituality," he grabbed first for his wife and then for his wallet—because somebody was about to be diddled.

Yet why shouldn't we courageously retrieve the fad-word "spirituality" from its contemporary abuse? Didn't Calvin adopt the old Latin word for "piety" to describe the practice of the Christian life? Yes, but there is a huge difference between the two. Piety does not entail the often self-serving subjectivism that seems inherent in the current vogue for spirituality. *Pietas* was a word redolent with rich and quite specific meanings. It connoted a sense of duty and responsibility and even patriotism, a deep devotion and loyalty to one's family and

homeland, as well as a kindness and tenderness towards others in need. In every case, *pietas* pointed the Romans to a reality beyond themselves—namely, to a huge sense of indebtedness to their country, to their parents, and of course to their gods. We should not be surprised, therefore, that the early Christians, like Calvin and the Puritans much later, adopted this ancient word to describe the nature of the Christian life. They, too, believed that life in Christ takes us out of ourselves—out of our pathetically small subjectivity—and into the grand public realm of God’s own mercy and holiness. Which is to say, of course, into the Body of Christ: the life of the church and its practices.

Professor McGrath warns of the dangers inherent in an overly cerebral Christianity, and he traces this danger to the Enlightenment’s stress on objectifying reason. This strikes me as a skewed reading of the Enlightenment. Certainly the 17<sup>th</sup> century did mark a new turn to the outward and observable world that can be known rationally and scientifically. Yet even this empiricist turn was not purely outward objective; it was also deeply inward and subjective. The notion that nature can be viewed neutrally was itself another lensed way of seeing. Even Descartes’ famous formula—*Cogito, ergo sum*—is marked by its emphasis on the thinking subject: I think. Surely this highly individualized and reflexive self is the chief creation of the Enlightenment. It is no accident that Christian pietism arose right alongside secular rationalism as its close cousin: they are both marked by this turn to the subject. I believe, therefore, that while the contemporary demand for spirituality speaks to a very deep human need, it is fundamentally a need created by Enlightenment self-referentiality.

The biblical tradition knows little of this concern with the inner and subjective self. The Hebrew tongue has no equivalent for our word “soul.” *Nephesh*, so my Hebraist friends remind me, should be translated “animated mud.” For the Jews, we humans are nothing other than inspirited dirtballs! Jesus joins the whole of the scriptural tradition in refusing our convenient modern distinction between the outward and inward life. Our Lord condemns the Pharisees, of course, for being whitewashed tombs full of dead bones. He accuses them of cleansing the outside of the cup and the plate while leaving the inside of the dishes dirty. But note ever so well that Christ doesn’t call the Pharisees to greater spiritual inwardness by abandoning their so-called legalistic tithes on mint and dill and cumin. He commands them, instead, to practice greater faithfulness in the keeping of Torah, which these smaller observances are meant to prompt: “You have neglected the weightier matters of law,” declares Jesus, “justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others” (Matt 23:23).

So it is also with St. Paul. His distinction between the spirit and the flesh is not a distinction between inner and outer so much as between the godly and the ungodly. Only because our

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carnality is often the locus of our consuming selfishness does Paul condemn it. Yet even then, its sins are less egregious than those of the flesh. When, therefore, Paul announces that “our outer nature is wasting away, while our inner nature is being renewed every day” (2 Cor 5:14), he is making no plea for us to forsake the outward life for the inward. Rather is he summoning us to make a full and perfect sacrifice of our bodies no less than our souls to God (Rom 12:1)—in and through the Body of Christ called the church. Paul knew well that the

Greek *persona* means “mask,” and that we are Christian persons only as we wear the right mask: the mask of Christ.

This accounts, I believe, for Paul’s strange admonition that we must not be caught naked and unclothed at the Second Coming. He commands us to *put on* the persona of Christ, and thus to be rightly clothed at Christ’s Return. Notice, by contrast, how many of our highly spiritual folks do not find anything extraordinary about this personifying of Christ. In their conviction that only what is inward and spiritual truly matters, they enter the presence of the Lord wearing backward baseball caps, thigh-high skirts, muscle-exhibiting shirts, and knockabout shoes. Thus do they make an unconscious statement that, for them, worship requires no drastic reclothing of our lives. I read only recently of a Christian death metal band (whatever *that* is) whose leader made this declaration: “God can change you without changing how you look.” Our fellow believers in the black churches deny this false distinction. They worship God in the beauty of their best attire. They want their clothes to reflect the glory of God’s own holiness. They have no dress-down days at church. Their spirituality is first of all outward in order that it might also be clothed in the whole armor of God and the garments of true righteousness. Like the well-dressed royalty whom God has made them and all of us to be, they intend to enjoy the marriage feast of the Lamb in *style*.

Consider these other arresting examples of outward and public piety. Gerard Manley Hopkins, the great Jesuit poet of 19<sup>th</sup> century England, joined his friends at Oxford in practicing what they called “the discipline of the eyes.” They believed that what we see shapes our souls. To behold ugliness and vulgarity and crudity is to risk the twisting and perversion of our very character. Yet many of us believe that, so long as we are attending to our inward spirituality, it doesn’t make much difference what we look at or provoke others to look at. Karl Barth also believed that what he *heard* shaped his soul. He began every day by listening to Mozart for an hour and then praying for another hour. Barth was not seeking to put himself into something as silly as “the mood for prayer.” He wanted, instead, to hear earthly echoes and musical parables of the heavenly Kingdom, so that when he prayed he might participate in the very life of God. In order that his prayers not become mere subjective meanderings among his own small-minded concerns, Barth always prayed aloud, even though he

prayed alone. Thus did Barth confess that in prayer we commune with the God who is closer than our own breath at the same time He is farther than we can imagine.

Once when two friends of C.S. Lewis came to collect him for a day's trip outside Oxford, they noticed that Lewis was walking up and down in his garden while they sat impatiently in the car. Lewis finally joined them, and his friends wanted to know why on earth he was pacing back and forth in the side yard: "What were you doing out there while we sat here waiting for you?" "Oh," replied Lewis, "I wouldn't dare leave home without first saying my prayers." Prayer, for C.S. Lewis, was an outward, even visible, habit that shaped his inward and spiritual life. Hence this hard but true saying from one of the Desert Fathers, Abba Agathon, as summarized by Bishop Kallistos Ware: "Prayer is the hardest of all tasks. If we do not find it difficult, perhaps it is because we have not really started to pray." It is largely in prayer, I believe, that we discover the awful otherness and hiddenness of God, no less than the wondrous nearness and dearness of God. We err, I believe, when we pray on the assumption that we know the Gospel in advance, and that we need only to apply it to our personal lives. Because God's Word is a sovereign, free and living Word, it is a Word which comforts only as it also terrifies. God's Word can never be comfortably assumed. The Cross is at once the place of God's supreme revelation as well as His complete hiddenness. Surely this means that the Gospel awaits our astonished rediscovery; indeed, our trembling re-conversion every day.

## II

In the second place, I want to contest Professor McGrath's claim that good theology is not enough, and he laments what he calls "theological correctness." If he refers to the theology practiced in the American Academy of Religion, then he should have said that *bad* theology is not enough! I believe, on the contrary, that good theology always issues in good preaching and good worship. Professor McGrath is right to protest against those few folk who believe that, by subscribing intellectually to certain prepositional claims—for example, about atonement or eschatology—we have become fully Christian. Yet I confess that I don't know many, if any, such folk. Our real problem lies not with those few remaining dispensationalists who get out their Schofield Bibles every morning and trace the successive ages of divine dispensation, nor with the tiny tribe of Calvinists who ponder the Synod of Dort every night before bed. It seems to me, therefore, that Professor McGrath has things exactly backwards when he approves of the Archbishop Donald Coggan's claim that "The journey from the head to the heart is one of longest and most difficult that we know."

I believe, quite to the opposite, that the journey from the heart to the head is not only the most difficult but also the most necessary in our subjective and emotion-bingeing age. Our real summons is to follow the example of St. Augustine in making sure that our faith seeks ever greater *intellectum*—ever greater understanding. It is not the brain-strained, therefore, but the brain-lamed believers who are often a scandal to

our Faith. Many advocates of Christian spirituality strike me as having over-emphasized the heart at the huge expense of the head. We have failed to follow the clear progress that St. Paul traces in Romans 6:17: "Thanks be to God that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the *heart* to the standard of *teaching* to which you were committed" (emphasis added). Obedient faith does indeed spring from our trusting hearts, but it also presses outward to the theological doctrines which keep it from becoming a spiritual form of self-indulgence.

Professor McGrath warns that knowledge can be a temptation to arrogance and a distraction from God. But surely he doesn't mean theological knowledge of a deeply doctrinal kind. I maintain that Christian doctrine is not only a reflective distillation of Christian experience but also a powerful spur to Christian experience. We come to know and to experience God more profoundly, I believe, in and through the bedrock claims contained in the great confessions of the Church. "Whoever has a little creed," said Charles Spurgeon, "has a little church." C.S. Lewis was once asked what kind of devotional reading he most favored. His interlocutor perhaps assumed that he would answer by referring to something like Oswald Chambers' *My Utmost for His Highest*. Instead, Lewis replied that his spiritual life was prompted by such theological treatises as Athanasius' *On the Incarnation*. Lewis was not preening. He was making the salient point that a spirituality which is not based upon—and which does not lead to—a profounder *knowledge* of God is bogus and bankrupt. "If you have a false idea of God," declared William Temple, "the more religious you are, the worse it is for you—it were better for you to be an atheist." For Lewis as for Temple, all thought that is sufficiently rigorous and thorough cannot but redound to the glory of God. After all, Jesus Christ is the *Logos* (i.e., Thought) become flesh.

In the opening pages of *The Screwtape Letters*, Lewis tells of an atheist whom the devil's minion named Screwtape had noticed to be reading in the British Museum. The satanic Screwtape immediately sought to interrupt this man's concentration. Screwtape tempted the atheist to think about his forthcoming lunch, to take a break, above all to go read a newspaper. Yet why would a devil want thus to distract an atheist? Any sustained argument, says Screwtape, even if it's atheistic argument, concentrates the mind on universal issues and thus proves dangerous to the Kingdom of Evil. Such serious thinking, Screwtape confesses, withdraws human attention from the realm where the demonic thrives—namely, from what Screwtape calls "the stream of immediate sensate experiences."

These words were written in 1942. Surely Lewis, were he living, would describe our entire culture as nothing other than "a stream of immediate sensate experiences." Its effect has been deadly for the life of the church no less than for our common social and academic life. I have students who confess that they can no longer take even a two-hour exam, much less a three, because their nerves cannot stand it. The reason is not far to find. The average television image lasts less than two seconds. Our minds and souls are sensorily pummeled by the

nihilistic images of modern advertising. We are thus rendered virtually incapable of sustained thought. Indeed, we find it almost impossible to imagine the regimen of reading and study that John Wesley set for his followers—a regimen which began, by the way, at five o'clock in the morning. Alistair Cooke, the former host of *Masterpiece Theatre*, has said that reading is such a rapidly disappearing art that its fate in the late 21<sup>st</sup> century will be akin to the fate of hand-quilting in the late 20<sup>th</sup>—namely, that it will become a merely curious pastime. W.H. Auden rightly called ours the Age of Anxiety. Our stomachs churn, our ears roar, our fingers thrum, and our colons are knotted with silent terror and secret unbelief. Most of us are so dependent upon medications that either “rev” us up or calm us down that one of my witty friends has formulated this aphorism: “Reality is for those who cannot stand drugs.” T.S. Eliot described our sense-saturated culture even more chillingly in his *Four Quartets*. There he says that we are “distracted from distraction by distraction.” Can it be that our current mania for spirituality is yet another distraction from our distraction?

I believe that we can answer in the negative only if our piety is rooted and grounded in theological preaching, even as it is also sustained by liturgical and sacramental worship. For St. Paul, the Gospel is not something to *be* preached so much as it is *preaching itself*. Faith comes by hearing, he declares on Romans 10:17: *fides ex auditu*. We are saved by the response which proclamation enables. Authentic preaching is thus necessarily and inherently theological. It is meant to feed us with such rich spiritual food that our souls will be nourished and our minds concentrated upon ultimate things. Far from being theologically stuffed and satiated, I find that my students and fellow church members are theologically starved and emaciated. Let a single example suffice. My upbringing in an East Texas church pastored by graduates of our Baptist seminaries was biblically rich and evangelistically strong, and I am ever so grateful for it. But I confess that it was theologically barren. I could have been spared enormous spiritual shallowness and immaturity by learning even such basic doctrines as justification by grace alone and sanctification through faith alone.

Yet I was never taught, from either the pulpit or the Sunday School room, the importance of even such an indispensable doctrine as the Trinity. No one proclaimed to me the Good News that we Christians are necessarily Trinitarian in our faith. Only because we believe that God has a rich and complete life unto himself—only as the three Persons of the Holy Trinity give themselves utterly to each other—only thus is God free to act in our behalf, delivering us from our present misery, as He enables us to participate in His own triune life of total self-surrendering love. To illustrate what a fearful price we pay for the neglect of this doctrine, Fisher Humphreys of the Beeson faculty tells a sad but funny story about one of his students who decided to observe Trinity Sunday by preaching a sermon on the Trinity. Afterwards, a deacon accosted him and pressed him with this question: “Preacher, why are you messing around with all that *Catholic* stuff?”

Even so, good preaching and teaching will not sustain

Christian life if they do not issue in good worship. Especially for those who stand in the non-creedal traditions, the heart of worship lies not only in our preaching and praying but also in the music. Our hymns are our sung creeds: they often set forth what we believe and practice more sharply and freshly than either our prayers or our sermons. Yet in many evangelical churches, our richly theological hymns are being rapidly replaced with praise songs. So far as I can see, they are useful mainly in helping young Christians memorize scripture. I am not calling for high falutin’ anthems and cantatas, nor for a return to hymns with archaic words and unsingable tunes. Rather am I calling for a recovery of the theologically and imaginatively rich music that characterizes the greatest of both our ancient and modern hymns. Consider, for example, four works that very few of my students know: “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling,” “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” and “Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy.” Then consider a praise song that they *all* know: “Majesty.” The hymns and the gospel song, both in their lyrics and their melodies, make us shudder with awe, tremble with thanksgiving, stand astonished at Calvary, mark the wonder of Christ’s intimacy with us, and ponder the cost of our glad surrender to the God who has yielded himself up for our sake. The praise song, by contrast, has rhymes that are banal, a tune that is saccharine, and a meaning that is sentimental if discernible at all. What is the nature of this “Kingdom authority [that] flows from his throne unto his own”? Surely not the *magisterium* of the one holy catholic and apostolic church! The praise song’s effect, I fear, is to make us feel what a Peter De Vries character honestly confesses: “Deep down, I’m rather shallow.”

Having offended perhaps everyone in the room, allow me to offer a final gesture of peace. I would remind us all, but especially the young people present, that Isaac Watts began his greatest hymn (and I believe it to be the greatest hymn in the English tongue) with these lines: “When I survey the wondrous cross,/Where the *young* Prince of glory died.” Watts knew that our Lord did not die as an old man but as a man on the very threshold of adult life, and therefore that the Gospel is surely meant for *all* men and women—for the exuberant young no less than for us who are gray and bald and deaf. Hence my hope that you might join me in protesting against those squeamish spiritualizers who have excised the most vivid stanza from Watts’ great hymn. This eradicated stanza plumbs tremendous depths by linking the drastic visibility of Christ’s saving act with our equally drastic response to it:

His dying crimson, like a robe,  
Spreads o’er his body on the tree:  
Then I am dead to all the globe,  
And all the globe is dead to me.

Christ’s body was drenched with gore, but this oozing blood became his great gown of glory. For here was no noble martyr’s death. Here the King of Cosmos bore our sin away. Only such Love can demand our bodies and our souls, or minds and hearts, our very life, our all. ■

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# We've Got Mail

*Letters from our Readers*

"To say that I was touched by the beautiful article written by Hal Haralson entitled 'A Good Deed Kept Secret' [August, 2001], would, indeed, be an understatement. Frankly, it made me smile from ear to ear and it made me cry genuine tears of happiness and joy to see that one or two dedicated Southwest Employees knew even in those early days that they were always empowered to 'do the right thing' and to practice the Golden Rule."

**Colleen Barrett, President, Southwest Airlines**

"Thank you for the really enlightening interview with Roger Paynter of Austin on the 'faith-based initiative' nonsense. The interview was more insightful on G. W. Bush than anything I've seen in any of the major media. The other essays—Dunn, Moody, Wellborn, Sellers, Valentine (wonderful curmudgeon), etc.—are also first-rate."

**Jim Nash, Burlington, MASS**

"I liked your article about Karla Faye—in fact, the magazine is one I read cover to cover. Many of the authors I know—others I hope to know even more through their articles."

**Virginia Connally, M.D., Abilene, TX**

"I have read [CET] from cover to cover and have entered a subscription online. I am impressed with the journal. . . . I intend to call it to the attention of my colleagues here at the University of North Texas. The journal is MUST reading."

**D. Barry Lumsden, Ph.D., Editor Community College Journal and Professor of Higher Education**

"*Christian Ethics Today* is one of the best things to happen to me, as for a number of years I have been concerned about the lack of ethics evident almost everywhere—even in Baptist institutions."

**Marvin Harris, Professor of English ret., ETBU.**

"Thanks for printing Truett's sermon on religious liberty. I had never read the sermon in its entirety."

**John Thielepape, Arlington, TX**

"I shared the June issue of CET with those at our 'Dead Pastors Society' (i.e., moderate Oklahoma pastors). Not only were they envious of my having copies before them, but also Bruce Prescott (Mainstream Oklahoma Baptists) was mildly miffed that you scooped him on Gladys S. Lewis' article."

**Richard Kaboe, Ph.D., Woodward, OK**

"Thank you for the Journal. I am grateful for Gladys Lewis' piece . . . We served together in happier times on the Board at SWBTS. She is one tremendous lady."

**Bill Cumbie, Springfield, VA**

"Thanks for printing Dan Gentry Kent's informative article on 'Can you Believe in Inerrancy and Equality?'"

**Henlee Barnette, Louisville, KY**

"*Christian Ethics Today* has greatly blessed my life . . . I pass my copy on to other preachers in the area and encourage them to subscribe."

**Strauss Atkinson, Amarillo, TX**

"I look forward to each issue and read them from cover to cover. My faith is enriched by your stimulating spectrum of writers."

**Paula Harrison, Dallas, TX**

"Have read your article [Institutional Ethics] twice and have seen your thesis frequently after being in ministry since 1948. Thank you for confirming what I have pondered for several years."

**Sam Phillips, Minister of Pastoral Care, FBC, Tulsa, OK**

"The Journal is in good hands. Bill Hull's fine piece on the *Left Behind* craze correctly decries that 'alternative positions are not out there in the marketplace competing for attention.' That's one reason I wrote *Making Sense Out of Revelation* [to be reviewed soon in CET]."

**Bill Turner, Pastor, South Main BC, Houston, TX**

**Editorial Postscript:** This summer we received a few letters from readers unhappy with some articles, particularly those critical of President Bush's "Faith-Based Initiative" and Ron Sider's article contending the President's tax proposal was "Grossly Unfair" to the poor.

The Journal is by its very nature controversial. As the old adage states, "We comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable." Perhaps that is too simplistic. But if we are doing our job, your comfort zone will at times be invaded, your traditions questioned, your convictions challenged, and hopefully, your understanding expanded.

A story is told of long-time Southern Seminary ethics professor Henlee Barnette once telling the President of his institution, "If you don't get a call from me each week that makes you want to fire me, I'm not doing my job!" Our job is not evangelism, but Christian ethics—and that can be very disturbing! ■

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# Fighting Wars

By Hal Haralson, Attorney  
Austin, Texas

He introduced himself as *Colonel* Jack Smith. I noticed how much he looked like an English Bulldog. His body was thick and squat and there was a permanent look of anger on his face.

I had not kept him waiting, so I could not be the target of his anger. I guessed him to be about 65.

"We've been married 40 years. She's trying to poison me. I can prove it."

He took his heavy briefcase off my desk and set it on the floor. After fumbling with the lock, he took out a file and showed me two charts.

"I've been sending food to the Mayo Clinic for two years. They analyze it and send me a report on the arsenic level. See how the level has climbed? She's going to kill me."

"What would you like from me Colonel?"

"I want a divorce. The quickest way possible. I want everything that's coming to me."

"You are aware, of course, that under Texas law one-half of all your assets belong to her unless they are your separate property?"

"I know that. We've got to inventory the house, especially her room. We have lived in separate bedrooms for the past ten years. We have dead-bolt locks on the doors."

The Colonel proceeded to describe his wife as a candidate for the Wicked Witch of the North.

I looked him in the eyes and said, "I'll help you get a settlement, an uncontested divorce. If you want to go to trial, then you have the wrong lawyer."

"I know about you. I've checked you out. I want this over and done with, with a minimum of hassle."

"Okay," I replied. "There will be a non-refundable retainer and if we go beyond that, I'll bill you by the hour." We signed an attorney/client agreement and the Colonel put his files back in his briefcase and left.

I prepared the divorce petition and filed it. A copy was mailed to Mrs. Smith. I waited to hear from her or from her attorney.

I received a letter from the Colonel. It was a military memorandum dated 10 June 1985:

1. On 2 June 1985 I retained you to represent me in the matter of a divorce from my wife.
2. On 20 June I will set up an appointment at which time you will report to me regarding:
  - a. Name, address and phone number of my wife's attorney;
  - b. Arrangements for inventory of my wife's bed-

room and the house;

- c. Progress you have made toward discovery of assets my wife may have hidden.

And on it went, signed at the bottom *Colonel Jack Smith* and his serial number. I had seen these things when I was an enlisted man in the Army. These were military orders.

When the Colonel returned for his second appointment, he set his briefcase on the floor and fiddled with it for a moment, then sat upright and faced me.

"If you will get out the memorandum I sent you, you can begin reporting on the matters I instructed you about."

"Colonel, before we go any further, I have something to say to you. June 12, 1959, is one of the most important dates in my life. On that date I was discharged from the United States Army.

"I spent two years in the military police and rose like a flash to PFC. My serial number is US54196628. I saluted my last officer 25 years ago. I neither salute officers nor take orders from them. You can take some comfort in knowing that I don't give orders or require that I be saluted.

"If you want to proceed on that basis, fine. If not, I'll write you a check for your retainer and you can be on your way."

Colonel Smith got red in the face and coughed and when he gained his composure said, "I would like to proceed."

"Fine," I replied. "I'll let you know when I hear from Mrs. Smith's attorney."

The reply to the petition came from an attorney I knew well and enjoyed working with. Along with it was a letter requesting two personal items—a Bible and a pistol—to be turned over to Mrs. Smith, indicating that they were her separate property.

When I made the request for the Bible and pistol, the Colonel laughed. "I knew she was going to try this. Those belong to me and I'll never turn them over to her."

The Colonel smiled for the first time. We were doing battle with his wife and he was enjoying it.

When I told the other attorney that the Colonel refused to turn the Bible and the pistol over, he immediately set a hearing for Temporary Orders.

At the hearing both the Colonel and Mrs. Smith testified. The Colonel was cocky in his military style, as if the judge had no reason not to rule in his favor.

But it didn't go that way. The judge ordered the Colonel to appear in court with the Bible and pistol in ten days and turn them over to Mrs. Smith's attorney.

The Colonel was furious. "I'm not going to obey the



judge's order. Those things are mine."

I warned him he could wind up in jail over this. He said he had a plan . . . but he wouldn't tell me what it was.

Before the hearing, the inventory of the house was set. Both attorneys were present. It took all day. I stuck my head in the door and there was the Colonel on his hands and knees counting spoons, forks, and knives and dictating the numbers into his tape recorder.

Mrs. Smith was there. She was petite little lady, about 60 years old, who served us cake and coffee. I could not imagine her poisoning a mouse.

The day of the hearing came. The Colonel took the stand and was sworn in. "Colonel, I ordered you to produce a pistol today. Do you have it?"

"No sir, I do not."

"Why not?"

"Your order was ambiguous."

"What do you mean?"

"The weapon is not a pistol. It is a handgun."

The old judge got red in the face and I knew what was coming.

"The Bible . . . do you have it?"

"No sir."

"And why not?"

"Same reason . . . ambiguous order . . . it is not a Bible. It is a New Testament."

I thought the judge was going to come down off the bench.

"Colonel, if that pistol and Bible are not in Mr. Haralson's hands by 4:00 this afternoon I'm ordering the sheriff to pick you up and put you in jail where you can stay until they are produced."

"Is that order clear, Colonel?"

"Yes sir."

"Any ambiguity?"

"No sir."

The pistol and Bible were turned over to me by 4:00 P.M. and the Colonel ordered me to appeal the judge's order. I told him that it was in interlocutory order and could not be appealed.

He got red in the face and very angry. "I'm giving you a direct order to appeal the judge's order. If you don't do it, you are fired." The Colonel left.

Two days later he called and made an appointment.

He came in and put his briefcase on the floor and went through the fumbling routine. When he looked up, I set my portable dictating machine on the table and turned it on.

"I want you to know that there are *two* tape recordings being made of this conversation."

He proceeded to order me to appeal the judge's order that he turn over the Bible and the pistol.

I told him again that it was not an appealable order.

"Then you are not going to file an appeal?"

"That's correct."

"You are fired."

He was gone.

I saw him at the courthouse about a month later and saw in the paper that the divorce was granted.

All was quiet. I knew what had happened. He had lost the battle against his wife. There was now a new battle to fight. There was a new enemy . . . me.

Sure enough, 18 months later I received by certified mail a 163-page complaint filed against me with the Travis County Bar Association Grievance Committee. I had 20 days to answer.

I filed a 164-page response. The Grievance Committee dismissed it all without a hearing.

It is sad when the most important part of a person's life is wrapped up in doing battle with others. I suspect there had been no love in the Colonel's life in many years. ■

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# EthixBytes

(A Collection of Quotes, Comments, Statistics, and News Items)

“Religious people,” said Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “should not be the servant of the state, nor the master of the state, but the conscience of the state.”

“If you buy 50 mega-lottery tickets a week, you would win the jackpot once every 30,000 years. Or if you purchase one ticket every mile you drive, you would make 167 trips to the moon and back before winning.” Odds expert and author Professor Mike Orkin.

According to Amnesty International, in 2000, four countries around the world accounted for 88 percent of all the executions—the United States, Iran, China, and Saudi Arabia. One U.S. state alone, Texas, accounted for 47 percent of executions in America.

“Statistics show that in Texas, which has more convicted murderers than any other state, capital defendants with appointed counsel were 28 per cent more likely to be convicted than those who can hire their own attorneys, and 44 per cent more likely to receive a death sentence if convicted.” Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor in a speech suggesting that innocent people have been put to death in the U.S.

“About 850 million people in the world go hungry every day. In 2001, each American farmer feeds 130 people, one-third of them outside the U.S. By the year 2010 the American farmer will need to feed 200 people, one-half of them outside the U.S.” NBC Today

“You mean creating surplus embryos is fine, discarding embryos is fine, keeping them in the freezer in perpetuity is fine, the only thing that is not fine is using them for medical research.” Bioethicist Bonnie Steinbock of the University of Albany in response to Roman Catholic opposition to using stem cells for potentially life-saving research.

“The U.S. national debt is \$5.8 trillion, of which \$2.4 trillion is government obligations. The other \$3.4 trillion is money the government owes to banks and investors, for which the government will pay \$204 billion in interest payments, about 10% of the entire federal budget.” News article by Bob Deans, Austin American Statesman

“Present research and numerous studies indicate the incidence of sexual abuse by clergy has reached horrific proportions—about 12 percent of ministers have engaged in sexual intercourse with members and 30-35 percent acknowledge sexually inappropriate behavior.” Joe E. Trull in a speech to Austin Baptist ministers and in *Broken Trust: Confronting Clergy Sexual Abuse*, Baptist General Convention of Texas.

“The problem is that the inevitability of factual, legal and moral error gives us a system that we know must wrongly kill some defendants, a system that fails to deliver the fair, consistent and reliable sentences of death required by the Constitution.” Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun near the end of his tenure in 1984, who played a significant role in restoring capital punishment in the U.S. in 1976.

“The SBC resolution (on campaign finance reform) against limiting ‘divinely granted’ free speech contains code phrases for allowing rich special interests to continue using their money to corrupt America’s political process. Because we don’t have fair and effective laws limiting the influence of money, America has the most corrupt government in the industrial world.” Charles Reed, Waco, *Baptist Standard Letters*

“International arms sales grew 8 percent last year, reaching \$36.9 billion, the highest figure since 1994. The U.S.A. remained the world’s leading arms merchant with almost \$18.6 billion in sales—Russia was second with \$7.7 billion, followed by France with \$4.1 billion, Germany with \$1.1 billion, Britain with \$600 million, China with \$400 million, and Italy

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# Vocation: Divine Summons<sup>©</sup>

By Gilbert Meilaender

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I have learned over the years that students, wearily carrying out a writing assignment, often have recourse to the dictionary. Assigned to write on a specific topic, they will begin with a dictionary definition. Let it never be said that I have learned nothing from reading their papers all these years. Look up the word *vocation* in a dictionary, and you will find that the first two meanings given will be something like the following: “1. a summons or strong inclination to a particular state or course of action; esp: a divine call to the religious life;; 2. the work in which a person is regularly employed: occupation.”

It was in part the genius and in part the danger of the Reformations of the 16<sup>th</sup> century that they tended to collapse the first of these into the second. One's vocation became simply one's work. To be sure, for the Reformers this was wider concept than what we have come to mean by work—which is, roughly, a job for the doing of which one is paid, a way to make a living. For example, familial responsibilities, though they do not belong to the sphere of work, were clearly understood by the Reformers to be part of one's vocation. Hence, a man could be very conscientious in the duties of his occupation and still fail terribly in his calling as a father.

Even granting such qualifications, however, it is true to say that for the Reformers vocation came to be associated with the responsibilities of everyday life, rather than with a divine summons to do something extraordinary. To that sanctification of everyday work—and to the dangers of such sanctification—I will return in a little while. It is one of the tensions built into our concept of vocation.

Even if we connect vocation not only with work but also with the domestic and familial responsibilities so essential to life, there may be other duties that call us as well. When Ken Burns produced his much acclaimed series of public television shows on the Civil War, one of the most powerful moments for many listeners was the reading of a letter written by Major Sullivan Ballou of the Second Rhode Island regiment to his wife, Sarah. Believing that his regiment would engage in battle within a few days, and reckoning with the fact that he might not return alive to her or to his sons, he wrote to Sarah, using quite naturally the language of vocation: “I have sought most closely and diligently, and often in my breast, for a wrong motive in this hazarding the happiness of those I loved and could not find one. A pure love of my Country and the principles I have often advocated before the people and ‘the name of

honor that I love more than I fear death’ have called upon me, and I have obeyed.” In such an instance we may find it harder to say whether we are still talking about the duties of everyday life, or whether a sense of vocation is here associated with something more heroic and extraordinary. In any case, this example begins to push us in the direction of the first—and deeper—tension I want to explore.

Students writing their papers tend to look simply at the several dictionary definitions of a word, but an unusually diligent student might also find ways to make use of the etymological information supplied in a dictionary entry. In the instance of the word *vocation*, this is not very complicated. Our English word has its root in the Latin *vocare*—to call or summon. A vocation is a calling—which implies a Caller. It is a summons. Taking this seriously will, I think, draw us into reflection upon a disturbing problem built into the idea of vocation. It reminds us also that—however often the concept of vocation has been connected especially to the Reformers, Luther and Calvin—the concept also has other important roots in Western culture.

It is, after all, Aeneas, depicted by Vergil as the destined founder of Rome, who says, in Robert Fitzgerald's translation: “I am the man/Whom heaven calls.” The *Aeneid* is, among other things, a poem about vocation. In their recent book, *Heroism and the Christian Life*, Brian Hook and Russell Reno have noted how Vergil's poem, certainly one of the formative epics of our culture, compels us to ponder what is the deepest problem in the idea of a vocation—namely, whether obedience to a divine summons diminishes or enhances the one who has been called. So I begin there.

Of the *Aeneid* C.S. Lewis once wrote that no one “who has once read it with full perception remains an adolescent.” What he had in mind was the Vergilian sense of vocation, which distinguishes the *Aeneid* from Homer's equally great epic, the *Iliad*. Homer's subject is not really the great contest between Greeks and Trojans; it is the personal story of Achilles' refusal to fight and of the events that bring him, finally, to change his mind. It is a story about the personal glory and honor of an heroic figure, and in such a story there may be fate but not vocation. There are personal triumphs and personal tragedies, but not a calling or a destiny in service of which greatness is exhibited. There is fate, but she is blind and, in her blindness, establishes a kind of equity among the warring parties. Both the nobility and the tragedy of heroes such as Achilles and

Hector are set against a background of meaningless flux. Thus, Simone Weil writes that “the progress of the war in the *Iliad* is simply a continual game of seesaw.” What is absent is divine purpose—and, therefore, as Lewis notes, none of the events in the *Iliad* can have the kind of significance that the founding of Rome has in the *Aeneid*.

Aeneas’s story is quite different. He is, Vergil tells us at the very outset, one who “came to Italy by destiny.” Suffering countless setbacks both on land and sea—“so hard and huge/A task it was to found the Roman people”—still he was “a man apart, devoted to his mission.” To be the man whom heaven calls exacts a great price. Having already endured the ten-year siege of Troy and its fall, having lost his wife while making his escape with a small band of surviving Trojans, Aeneas must still suffer the wrath of Juno—storm, plague and warfare—as he journeys from the ruins of Troy (on the western coast of modern Turkey) to Italy.

Seven summers after Troy’s fall, Aeneas’s company—still on the way—takes refuge from a storm at a port in Sicily. There they hold a festival to commemorate the death of Aeneas’s father, Anchises. But in the midst of these games the Trojan women are moved to consider how long they have been wandering and how many hardships they have suffered.

*But on a desolate beach apart, the women  
Wept for Anchises lost as they gazed out  
In tears at the unfathomable sea.*

*“How many waves remain for us to cross,  
How broad a sea, though we are weary, weary?”  
All had one thing to say: a town and home  
Were what they dreamed of, sick of toil at sea.*

The women set fire to the ships, hoping—though unsuccessfully, of course—to compel the company to settle permanently in Sicily. They force Aeneas himself to wrestle with “momentous questions.”

*Should he forget the destiny foretold  
And make his home in Sicily, or try  
Again for Italy?*

Finally, he accepts the advice of Nautes that those “too weary of your great quest” should be permitted to remain behind and settle in Sicily. “Set them apart, and let them have their city/Here in this land, the tired ones.”

A vocation exacts a price, and not all can pay it. Even though it may seem to draw us, its point is not happiness. It is, as C.S. Lewis notes, the nature of vocation to appear simultaneously both as desire and as duty. “To follow the vocation does not mean happiness; but once it has been heard, there is no happiness for those who do not follow.” The price of a calling had been made clear to Aeneas himself even earlier. In one of the most famous books of the *Aeneid*, Vergil recounts the love affair of Aeneas and Dido. Their ships buffeted by a tremendous storm at sea, the Trojan company has made it to shore on the coast of North Africa, where the new colony of Carthage is being founded by a group of immigrants from Tyre and their queen, Dido.

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## *A vocation exacts a price, and not all can pay it.*

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Weary of the endless journeying to which Aeneas’s destiny has committed them, the Trojans are glad to stay for a time at Carthage while they repair their ships. Aeneas, in particular, finds happiness and seeming fulfillment in overseeing the work of building Carthage, and ominously, he and Dido fall passionately in love. But when Jupiter learns this, he commands Mercury

to remind Aeneas of the task he has been given

*What has he in mind? What hope, to make him stay  
Amid a hostile race, and lose from view  
Ausonian progeny, Lavinian lands?*

*The man should sail: that is the whole point.*

*Let this be what you tell him, as from me.*

“The man should sail.” In the Latin, one word: *naviget!* The divine summons—which wounds even as it lures.

Mercury delivers the message, Aeneas hears and obeys. He gives orders to prepare the ships to sail, but, of course, Dido learns what is happening and begs him to stay.

*Duty bound,*

*Aeneas, though he struggled with desire  
To calm and comfort her in all her pain,  
To speak to her and turn her mind from grief,  
And though he sighed his heart out, shaken still  
With love of her, yet took the course heaven gave him  
And went back to the fleet.*

Her sister Anna brings Dido’s pleas to Aeneas, asking him at least to postpone his departure and not to leave so abruptly. “But no tears moved him. . . . God’s will blocked the man’s once kindly ears.” Aeneas has for the first time in a long time been happy and content in Carthage—sharing Dido’s love, overseeing the work of construction. Dido seems finally to have found new love, years after the death of her husband Sychaeus. The Trojan company seems to have found a place to settle.

But it is not the homeland to which they are called, and it is not the city Aeneas has been summoned to found. This is not his calling. “The man should sail.” As Hook and Reno write, Vergil “does not wish us to cast our lot with Dido and our anachronistic ideas of authenticity.” Do you want to know what is your vocation? Then the first question to ask is not, “What do I want to do with my life?” It is not as if I first come to know myself and then choose a vocation that fulfills and satisfies me. For it is only by hearing and answering the divine summons, by participating in my calling, that I can come to know who I am. We are not who we think we are; we are who God calls us to be. “The man should sail.”

And sail he does—away from Carthage, willing to participate in his destiny. But perhaps for all readers, and certainly, I suspect, for at least some, a question presses insistently upon us. Hood and Reno sharpen the point when they write: “Aeneas sails away from Carthage changed, a greater hero in potential, but in most ways obvious to him and to us, a lesser man.” That’s the issue: Does obedience to his calling enhance or diminish Aeneas? That calling has drawn him away from ordinary human loves, it has compelled him to harden himself

against quite natural emotions, it has brought upon him and those who accompany him countless hardships. That calling requires not that he seek to be himself, not that he ask first what he wants to do, not that he authentically determine his being—but that he obey. He says to Dido: “I sail for Italy not of my own free will” (*Italiam non sponte sequor*). One way to put all this is to note that for many readers Aeneas seems to become an almost divine figure, more than human, as his person is folded into his calling as founder of Rome. The other way to put it is to note that it can sometimes be hard to distinguish between one who is more than human and one who is, simply, inhuman. Especially for us, devoted as we are to authenticity and autonomy, the divine summons to obedience may seem to have left Aeneas diminished rather than enhanced. Such may be the price of a calling.

Is the price too great? Has Aeneas, in turning from authenticity to obedience, diminished his humanity? How we answer that question will tell us a good bit about ourselves. “I have read,” C.S. Lewis writes, “that his [Vergil’s] Aeneas, so guided by dreams and omens, is hardly the shadow of a man beside Homer’s Achilles. But a man, an adult, is precisely what he is: Achilles had been little more than a passionate boy. You may, of course, prefer the poetry of spontaneous passion to the poetry of passion at war with vocation, and finally reconciled. Every man to his taste. But we must not blame the second for not being the first. With Virgil European poetry grows up.” In an effort to understand, make sense of and confirm Lewis’ judgment we may recall another reader of Vergil.

In Book I of his *Confessions*, Augustine remembers how, as a boy, “I was forced to learn all about the wanderings of a man called Aeneas, while quite oblivious of my own wanderings.” How sinful must he not have been, Augustine suggests, to care more about the wanderings of Aeneas in search of homeland than about the wanderings of his own soul away from the One for whom he was made. “What indeed can be more pitiful than a wretch with no pity for himself, seeping at the death of Dido, which was caused by love for Aeneas, and not weeping at his own death, caused by lack of love for you, God. . . .?” And yet, at a deeper level, we must suppose that what Augustine learned from Vergil may have reinforced what he was eventually to learn from scriptures, from his mother Monica and from Ambrose.

The wanderings of Augustine’s soul find their pattern in the story of Aeneas. “I came to Carthage,” Augustine writes at the outset of Book III, conscious certainly that this was Dido’s Carthage, “and all around me in my ears were the sizzling and frying of unholy loves.” And years later, having decided to teach rhetoric in Rome rather than Carthage, a decision opposed by his mother, Augustine stole away on ship at night, going—like Aeneas—from Carthage to Rome, and leaving a weeping woman behind. This is the Augustine of whom, in that great scene in the garden, Lady Contenance asks what is essentially a vocational question: “Why do you try and stand by yourself and so not stand at all? Let him [God] support you.” This is the Augustine who, having been converted from the false ideal of personal authenticity and having handed over

to God his broken will, torn between desire and duty, concludes that he can be an authentic self only in submission to God’s call—concludes, indeed, that only God can catch the heart and hold it still, that only God can know him as he truly is. “There is still something of man, which even the spirit of man that is in him does not know. But you, Lord, know all of him, you who made him.”

Thus, Augustine learned—more from the story of Jesus than from that of Aeneas—“what the difference is between presumption and confession, between those who see their goal without seeing how to get there and those who see the way which leads to that happy country.” That was not anything Augustine had done, his own hard and huge task; it was something that had been done for him. What he found in the story of Jesus that he had not found elsewhere was “the face and look of pity, the tears of confession, your sacrifice.” The story of Jesus’ own obedience makes clear that what looks like an annihilation of the self may, in fact, be its enlargement. We flourish as we answer obediently God’s call. And this, in turn, has an important effect on our understanding of vocation. As Hook and Reno observe, the more we believe that God has himself done whatever needs to be done and that our task is simply to answer his call, “the less room appears to be left for our greatness our achievement, and accomplishment.” Vocation, it seems, need no longer be heroic—which brings us back to the other issue I identified at the outset.

Consider, for example, the following passage from John Galsworthy’s novel *One More River*, in which a character named Dinny reflects on the death of old Betty Purdy.

*Death! At its quietest and least harrowing, but yet—death! The old, the universal anodyne; the common lot! In this bed where she had lain nightly for over fifty years under the low sagged ceiling, a great little old lady had passed. Of what was called “birth,” of position, wealth and power, she had none. No plumbing had come her way, no learning and no fashion. She had borne children, nursed, fed and washed them, sewn, cooked, eaten little, traveled not at all in her years, suffered much pain, never never known the ease of superfluity; but her back had been straight, her ways straight, her eyes quiet and her manners gentle. If she were not the “great lady,” who was?*

Perhaps there is something heroic here, but nothing extraordinary. There is no quest for the great deed required by God. There are only the everyday tasks, infused with the sense of duty and dignity that may make it appropriate to describe them as a calling.

When less room is left for our greatness and our achievement, this is what ultimately happens to the idea of vocation. If the seeds were already there in Augustine’s rereading of the story of Aeneas, it took centuries for this leveling or democratizing of vocation to work itself out in the thought of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Reformers. “The affirmation of ordinary life finds its origin,” Charles Taylor writes, “in Judaeo-Christian spirituality, and the particular impetus it receives in the modern era comes first of all from the Reformation. . . . The highest can no longer be defined by an exalted *kind* of activity; it all turns on the *spirit* in which one lives whatever one lives, even the most mun-

dane existence.” That spirit is eloquently captured in George Herbert’s poem *The Elixir*, which reads in part:

*Teach me my God and King  
In all things thee to see,  
And what I do in anything,  
To do it as for thee. . . .  
A servant with this clause  
Makes drudgery divine;  
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,  
Makes that and th’ action fine  
This is the famous stone  
That turneth all to gold:  
For that which God doth touch and own  
Cannot for less be told.*

This sentiment, both beautiful and powerful, intensifies our sense of vocation not by drawing us away from ordinary duties to some great quest but by drawing us more deeply into them. The strength—or, at least, one strength—of this shift is that the demands and the blessings of a calling are placed on every person. When a vocation is something as extraordinary and heroic as the huge labor of founding Rome—or, even, to take the example that more concerned the Reformers, something as extraordinary as the monastic life—it cannot be generally accessible. So, for example, in his well-known essay, *Our Calling*, Ellinar Billing, a Swedish Lutheran theologian of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, wrote: “The more fully a Catholic Christian develops his nature, the more he becomes a stranger to ordinary life, the more he departs from the men and women who move therein. But in the evangelical [he means Lutheran] church it cannot, it should and may not be. The evangelical church does not seek to create religious virtuosos, but holy and saintly men and women in the call.” Now, Billing writes, “the demand to become a unique Christian character is put on each and every individual.”

As those who have read Gustaf Wingren on Luther or Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch on “innerworldly asceticism” will know, the power of such an understanding of vocation—sanctifying the work of every life, however humble—is undeniable, but it is by no means free of danger. The beauty of Herbert’s poem notwithstanding, we should be hesitant to sanctify drudgery—as if one should not retire from it if one could. Still more, there is sometimes backbreaking and dangerous labor, or tedious and boring work, that must be done if we or our loved ones are to live, but the language of vocation imbues such work with a kind of meaning and significance that may seem unbelievable to those who must actually do it. They work to live; they do not live to work. Taken seriously, the sanctification of such laborious or tedious work with the language of vocation would suggest that we should struggle to find more time for it, not plot ways to escape it.

More important still, this sanctifying of ordinary work, this sense that it becomes exalted if only approached in the right spirit, may cause us to forget that a divine summons must not only hallow but also transform whatever we do. When the difference between a carpenter and a Christian carpenter, a historian and a Christian historian, a father and a Christian father,

an artist and a Christian artist, a soldier and a Christian soldier—when all these differences are reduced to a matter of the “spirit” in which the work is done, we are well on our way to making the divine summons largely irrelevant. Whatever work we want to do—we’ll just call that our vocation.

This is to nod at the call of God and go on our way; it is to lose the infinite, transforming horizon of God’s call. To the degree that we collapse the divine call into the work we regularly do, work pretty much like that done by many others, we really collapse the two love commandments into one. We suppose that in loving the neighbor—and in no more than that—the love of God consists, as if we were made, ultimately, for work and not for rest in God.

If we try to unify our lives through the idea of vocation—by supposing that God summons us only to good work pretty much like everyone else’s work—we lose the infinite horizon of God’s call. It was Augustine—again—who saw clearly that such a unified life cannot be ours in this world. When, at the beginning of Book XIX of his *City of God*, Augustine enumerates Varro’s 288 possible answers to the question, “What is the good life?” and rejects them all, his rejection, as Peter Brown has written, “marks the end of classical thought.” In place of the classical ideal of a unified life actually available to us here and now, Augustine substitutes the image of a pilgrim who must live in hope.

We should be equally clear that a life faithfully committed to the responsibilities of our vocation is not itself “the good life.” God calls us not just to that but to himself—beyond every earthly joy or responsibility, beyond any settled worldliness which places its hope for meaning in those we love or the work we do. This lesson is taught unforgettably in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*.

The engine that drives Dante’s desire for the beatific vision is not simply love for God. It is love for that particular woman, Beatrice, whose beauty has drawn him every step of the way and through whose beauty he is being summoned beyond himself and toward the One who is Beauty itself. On his journey through hell and purgatory Dante has had Vergil as his guide. By the time we come to the end of the *Purgatorio*, in fact, Vergil has come to seem a permanent fixture on Dante’s way. Then, in Canto XXX of the *Purgatorio*, Beatrice finally appears. And instantly, Dante writes,

*There came on me, needing no further sight,  
Just by that strange, outflowing power of hers,  
The old, old love in all its mastering might.*

Overcome by emotion, Dante turns, as he has so often along the way, to Vergil for reassurance—and Vergil is gone. He has taken Dante as far as he may, as far as human wisdom is able, but now love—love for that particular woman Beatrice as the image of a still greater Beauty—must take Dante the rest of the way. Tears come unbidden to his eyes, and Beatrice says:

*Dante, weep not for Vergil’s going—keep  
As yet from weeping, weep not yet, for soon  
Another sword shall give thee cause to weep. . . .  
Look on us well; we are indeed, we are  
Beatrice. How hast thou deigned to climb the hill?*

*Didst thou not know that man is happy here?*

The loss of Vergil, his master and guide, is a sword that pierces Dante's soul—a necessary pain if he would see God. But an even greater renunciation awaits Dante in Canto XXXI of the *Paradiso*. In preparation for that renunciation we might recall the scene in Book VI of the *Aeneid*, when Aeneas, journeying in the underworld to see his father Anchises, confronts Dido among the souls of those who have taken their own life. He weeps as he speaks to her:

*I left your land against my will, my queen,  
The gods' commands drove me to do their will, . . .  
And I could not believe that I would hurt you  
So terribly by going. Wait a little.  
Do not leave my sight. . . .*

*But she had turned  
With gaze fixed on the ground as he spoke on,  
Her face no more affected than if she were  
Immobile granite or Marpesian stone.  
At length she flung away from him and fled,  
His enemy still, into the shadowy grove  
Where he whose bride she once had been, Sychaeus,  
Joined in her sorrows and returned her love.*

Dido turns away from Aeneas—but not in hope for any new and greater love. Instead, she returns to an old love, and Aeneas takes up again his huge and hard task.

Not so for Dante as he journeys toward the vision of God. Beatrice has now taken him as far as she is able. She has brought him to the very brink of that final mystical vision shared by all the redeemed, she has prepared him to look upon the face of God. And now, if he is to answer the divine summons, he must turn from image to reality. As Dante gazes at the snow-white rose that is filled with rank upon rank of the redeemed who look upon God, he turns to Beatrice that she may explain it to him.

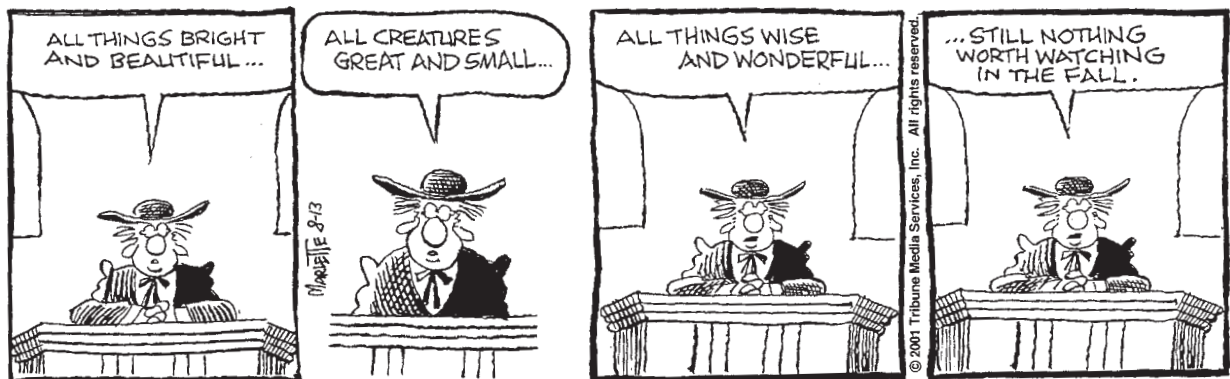
And she is gone—returned to her place within those heavenly ranks. Looking up, Dante sees her “in her glory crowned, / Reflecting from herself the eternal rays,” and he utters a plea that she continue to pray for him.

*Such was my prayer and she, so distant fled,  
It seemed, did smile and look on me once more,  
Then to the eternal fountain turned her head.*

The austerity of that moment is overpowering. When we consider all that Dante has endured to find her, when we consider that it was she who had charged Vergil to be his guide, she who, as Dante says, “to bring my soul to Paradise, / Didst leave the imprint of thy steps in Hell,” and when we consider that now—at last—he has come to her . . . seeing all that, we must see yet one thing more. It has, finally, been the beauty not of Beatrice but of God through Beatrice that has been summoning Dante all along the way. Having accomplished that, she turns her face away from him, once more to the eternal fountain. She does not leave him, nor he leave her behind, but together they are to gaze at the love that moves the sun and the other stars. It is not simply the beauty of Beatrice that has been summoning and drawing Dante, but God, and in looking away from him to God she does no harm to his joy or her own. “Didst thou not know that man is happy here?”

C.S. Lewis's *A Grief Observed*, written after the death of his wife Joy, ends with an evocation of this scene from the *Paradiso*. Lewis writes: “She said not to me but to the chaplain, ‘I am at peace with God.’ She smiled, but not at me.” Likewise, in his powerful and astringent chapter on charity in *The Four Loves*, Lewis writes that “there is no good applying to Heaven for earthly comfort. Heaven can give heavenly comfort; no other kind. . . . We were made for God. Only by being in some respect like Him, only by being a manifestation of His beauty, lovingkindness, wisdom or goodness, has any earthly Beloved excited our love. . . . It is not that we shall be asked to turn from them, so dearly familiar, to a Stranger. When we see the face of God we shall know that we have always known it.”

Beyond and through every earthly love and every earthly duty, we are to hear the call of God. On the one hand, we are called to the God who can put an end to our work and bring fulfillment to our loves and labors. “Didst thou not know that man is happy here?” But on the other hand, this call will often exact a price along the way—the price of renunciation, of huge and hard labor. At times, to be sure, by God's grace, our calling may bring considerable joy and satisfaction, but it cannot offer settled contentment. For, as Augustine says, “It is one thing to see from a mountaintop in the forests the land of peace in the distance . . . and it is another thing to hold to the way that leads there.” Which is to say: For now, “The man should sail.” ■



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# Should Christians Pray the Prayer of Jabez?

By Michael D. Riley, Pastor

First Baptist Church, Plano, Texas

**Editor's Note:** Dr. Riley earned a Ph.D. in Old Testament from Southwestern Seminary and has just become the pastor of Hendricks Memorial Baptist in Jacksonville, Florida.

In the past few years Bruce Wilkinson's little book *The Prayer of Jabez* has sold millions of copies. The words of Jabez found in 1 Chronicles 4:9-10 are being prayed by many Christians on a daily basis who believe that God is blessing them for their efforts. Pastors have shared Wilkinson's principles of the prayer and have encouraged their congregations to pray the prayer of Jabez. In the preface of the book Wilkinson writes that God will always answer this prayer! With such great attention being given to the prayer of Jabez, a closer examination needs to be given to Wilkinson's popular devotional book. Does the prayer of Jabez stand out as a model prayer in the Old Testament and should Christians continue to pray the Jabez prayer?

The story of Jabez is sandwiched between fragments of a genealogical listing of the descendants of Judah. Apparently the mother of Jabez experienced greater pain than normal during the birth of her son. Following the delivery the mother named her son Jabez which is a play on the Hebrew word for "pain." It is not known whether Jabez's own life was characterized by suffering. Certainly his name subjected him to insults and ridicule by those who associated his name with his character. Although the text is silent about whether Jabez was physically handicapped, it is possible that a life of suffering prompted his request for God to bless him. It is interesting, however, to note that Jabez was "more honorable than his brothers." The word "honor" used in this passage implies a person who was treated with respect by the community. Thus, even before his prayer Jabez experienced the blessing of being a respected member of his society!

Wilkinson's version of the prayer in his book reads: "*Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain.*" Wilkinson's understanding of the translation is slightly at odds with the Hebrew text. A more accurate expression of the prayer based on the Hebrew text: "*If you would bless me and increase my borders, if your hand would be with me and keep me from evil and cause me no harm. . .*"

The prayer actually takes the form of a request/vow formula. Wilkinson divides the prayer into four parts but the prayer in the Hebrew is a singular petition. The request represents the first part of the prayer but the vow is missing. Wilkinson's phrase "that I may not cause pain" is a curious rendering of the text. The phrase does not occur in the Hebrew and the addition of these words suggests that Jabez is thinking about more than

merely himself. But in point of fact, Jabez actually prays that God would cause him no harm. Perhaps the intention of Jabez's request for a blessing was to have been followed by a promise of obedience, but the promise for some reason was never recorded in Scripture.

Jabez requested that God would bless him by enlarging his territories. His prayer includes a desire for health that he might enjoy his new lands. Some scholars believe that the town of Jabez, mentioned in 1 Chronicles 2:55, is to be associated with the man, Jabez. There is conjecture that pain and difficulty marred his life. After all his very name was an ever-present reminder of his fragile being. Jabez prayed that his life might be a contradiction to his name, that he might be both wealthy and healthy. God's blessing would then serve to counteract the name given to him by his mother at birth.

Wilkinson writes that this prayer is the "key to a life of extraordinary favor with God" (Preface). It is true that God answered Jabez's prayer, but I am puzzled as to why Wilkinson elevates this prayer above all other prayers in the Bible. Wilkinson claims that he has prayed this prayer daily for over 30 years! In fact Wilkinson says that this one sentence, next to his "salvation sentence," is the most revolutionary sentence in his life!

Does the Bible give the prayer of Jabez such lofty status? In the Hebrew Scripture the prayer is simply a request that God would intervene in a seemingly troubled man's life and reverse his conditions. There is no overtly spiritual reason why Jabez pleaded for God to act in his life. Even though God answered the prayer, Jabez is never again mentioned in the Bible. Wilkinson rightly states that "if Jabez had worked on Wall Street, he might have prayed, 'Lord, increase the value of my investment portfolio'" (31). How far this prayer is from Paul's counsel "to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings . . ." (Philippians 3:10). But one does not blame Jabez for his lack of spiritual insight. He prayed in the dim shadows of faith before the light of Christ.

The Old Testament vision of blessing consisted of concrete realities. A Hebrew could not envision a spiritual blessing disconnected from material benefits. When Isaac was tricked into giving his blessing to Jacob, the blessing was tied to "an abundance of grain and new wine" (Gen. 27:27-29). Blessing in the Old Testament was consistently associated with property, power and things. Wilkinson takes a giant leap away from the intent of



the prayer by imposing his own theological bias on the prayer of Jabez.

Wilkinson insists that Jabez in reality had a spiritual intention to “expand my opportunities and my impact in such a way that I touch more lives for Your glory”(32). There is no place in the prayer of Jabez, however, where this interpretation is ever implied! Jabez is not praying for greater opportunity for ministry. To put it bluntly, Jabez is praying for wealth and health! Wilkinson further adds, “From both the context and the results of Jabez’s prayer, we can see that there was more to his request than a simple desire for more real estate. He wanted more influence, more responsibility, and more opportunity to make a mark for the God of Israel”(30). I am not at all sure how Wilkinson derives this meaning from the text.

Throughout the Old Testament, the community of faith struggled with the relationship between success and failure. To be blessed of God would be evidenced by tangible, material prosperity. Therefore, it was thought that the righteous would prosper and the wicked would suffer. This theme occurs again and again in the book of Proverbs. Job, however, offers a dissenting perspective. Job’s three friends plead with him to confess his sins. His calamity surely must be a sign of God’s displeasure as a result of a personal affront to God. Yet the book of Job disavows the relationship between righteousness and blessing. Job testifies that sometimes bad things simply happen to good people, but it would be centuries before this concept would seep into the consciousness of Israel. First century listeners were shocked that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount that blessing could be separated from material benefit. The Beatitudes present blessing in a different light from the majority of voices in the Old Testament. Jesus called the “poor in spirit” blessed as well as “those who mourn,” or the ones who are “meek,” or the “merciful.” A blessing apart from visible advantages had a difficult time registering on the hearts of Israel even in the time of Christ, let alone centuries earlier! Even the disciples (John 9) could not comprehend tragedy apart from sin until Jesus enlightened them. Furthermore, Jesus as Messiah was rejected in large part because his kingdom was not of this world. John the Baptist, whom Jesus called the greatest man born among women, was thrown off balance when Jesus’ mission took on a spiritual dimension to the neglect of an earthly kingdom.

There is nothing in the prayer of Jabez that anticipates blessing with a spiritual dimension. The prayer of Jabez clearly

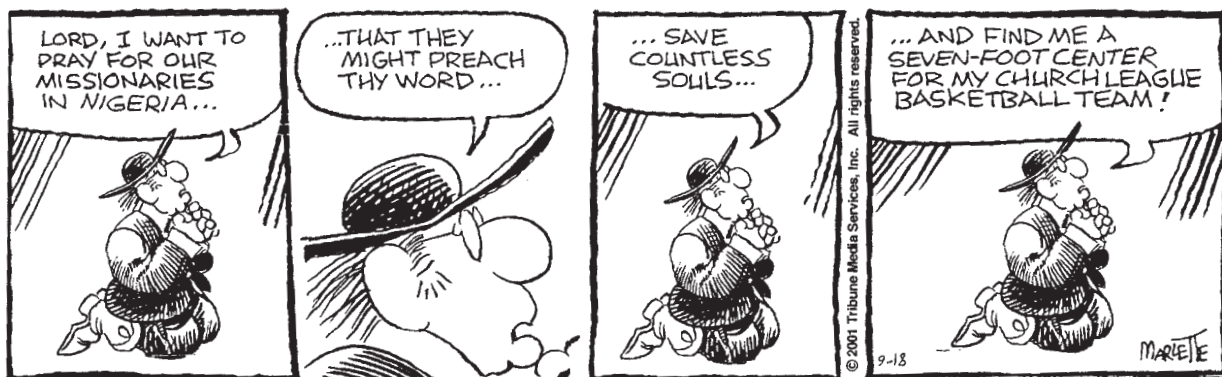
reflects an Old Testament attitude about God and faith. True, there are a few mountain peaks in the Old Testament of prayer and faith that give us a hint that one day God will reveal himself more fully to the human heart. Solomon’s prayer for an understanding mind is such a high point of faith as is Isaiah’s vision of the Suffering Servant or Jeremiah’s hope of a new covenant with God, but Jabez’s prayer for blessing is not such a high watermark for Old Testament faith.

In fairness Wilkinson shows that he is aware of the New Testament model of faith when he writes, “Do we really understand how far the American Dream is from God’s dream for us? We’re steeped in a culture that worships freedom, independence, personal rights, and the pursuit of pleasure . . .”(70). I could not agree with Wilkinson more, but the prayer of Jabez is not the place to go to find such teaching. The lesson from Jabez is that God helps us to rise above our inherent hardships. Our birth circumstances do not necessarily define our existence if we have faith to trust in God. The prayer has a message for faith but it is an incomplete message. Jabez’s prayer was not formed by the Master’s call to deny self and pick up one’s cross, and it is only in following the way of Jesus that we will receive God’s true blessing.

There is no biblical basis for Wilkinson to call the prayer of Jabez the most important sentence in the Bible next to his salvation sentence. The prayer is the expression of one man but not a model prayer for all of God’s people. The Psalms represent a more authentic articulation of prayer in the Old Testament; in fact the Psalter has been called the Prayer Book of the Church. In the New Testament, clearly the model prayer is the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray. A comparison between the prayer of Jesus and the prayer of Jabez reveals stark differences. A few examples will suffice:

- Jabez prayed that he might have his way; Jesus prayed for God’s will to be done.
- Jabez prayed for more land; Jesus prayed for just enough bread to meet his daily need.
- Jabez prayed that he might have his kingdom; Jesus prayed for God’s kingdom.
- When the disciples needed a model for their prayer lives, Jesus gave them one that would endure throughout the ages.

Why would any serious follower of Jesus want to sit at the feet of Jabez when he could instead sit at the feet of Jesus? ■



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# Two Essays on Technology

*By Dwight A. Moody, Dean of the Chapel*  
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## What Technology Can Do for Your Church

2001©

One church consultant has developed a list of ten rules for successful churches. Number eight says simply, "Connect with technology: Churches trying to reach post-moderns will use technology in worship."

This has the appearance of extraordinary insight, but in reality, technology and religion go back a long way.

Think about the Bible as a printed book. It was a technological innovation called the printing press that introduced the handheld Bible to the world. It was a novel idea in 1453 when Man of the Millennium Gutenberg started rolling them off his press. Within decades it profoundly reshaped the Christian movement, especially the worship.

The same can be said for music, with the emergence of the piano and the organ; and in our day, the guitar. Consider how technological advances changed church architecture, heating and cooling, and most importantly, plumbing?

Still not convinced? How dependent have we become on sound systems? Preachers of the last century spoke to crowds large and small without the help of amplification.

These days we have sound tracks, video screens, and computers; and we have not yet begun to imagine all of the ways these new technologies can enhance worship.

Every pew needs a smart card swipe device mounted next to the bookrack and visitor card holder (to mention some out-of-date sanctuary implements). With this device, persons can access information related to their giving record, the financial condition of the church, or special offerings of the day. Money could be transferred from the bank of the parishioner to the selected church account. Offering plates are old economy.

Music, of course, needs to be upgraded to Dolby surround sound, with those special effects capabilities to enhance sermonic references to earthquakes, armies, and brimstone. It will give a fresh, powerful meaning to the question, "Didn't you feel the Spirit, sister?"

The video screen is becoming as common as the pulpit;

and for good reason: it has unlimited potential for taking every facet of worship to the next level.

First, it replaces that artifact of the old technology, the printed order of worship. Few of us today remember the centuries of worship prior to the advent of the Sunday bulletin.

Second, the screen offers fundraising potential. "This baptism brought to you by Cornerstone Cleaners, where all your clothing come out spotless." Or: "This communion service underwritten by Baker's Family Restaurant. Use your church identification card in the swipe machine on the pew in front of you to make your reservations for today's Sunday dinner."

Third, can I mention the digitally enhanced preacher? If we use a camera to film the service and project it on the screen, doesn't this offer the average to ugly minister the long awaited opportunity for transformation into one of the beautiful people that attract attention and influence people?

Come to think of it why should everyone be watching the same screen and hearing the same sermon? That is, like, so yesterday! Take a cue from the 28-screen theaters: "Today's sermon choices: Temptation and Forgiveness, now showing on screen one; Overcoming Grief on screen two; and a sneak preview on screen three: How to Find and Marry the Person God has Chosen for You." You get the picture.

Speaking of the sermon, why not handheld viewer response gadgets? A feedback monitor on the pulpit (or in a technologically enhanced Bible) can warn the preacher (or whomever is operating the screen) when an idea has connected, when an illustration fails, and when people are ready to go home. Assessing and interpreting this information in process would be the work of the associate pastor, having been trained in a Microsoft-connected seminary.

I haven't fully explored the potential of holograms. And what about the creative format of a popular TV game show? Anybody for "Who wants to a Christian?" complete with lifelines and prizes? All for Jesus, of course (Jewish and Muslim versions coming next year).

Yes, technology is a wonderful thing and, like always, will bring us closer to God and to one another. By the way, I am thinking of a new career as a worship consultant (as soon as I figure out what it means to be "postmodern"). Do I have a future or what? ■

# To Clone or Not to Clone: What Saith the Commandments?

2001©

The place to post the Ten Commandments is on the office wall of Pannayiotis Zavos. Zavos is, in the words of Time magazine, “the well-known infertility specialist of the University of Kentucky.” He has announced his intentions to clone a human.

Cloning is the product of human curiosity and scientific discovery. For sheer power to amaze, for brute unthinkable-ness, for unmitigated audacity, cloning has moved to the front of the line. It has leapfrogged over atom splitting, space walking, genome counting, and web traveling (and all other stunning developments in the remarkable sage of modern technology) to become the dilemma of choice for all who bring moral discernment to bear on public policy.

Who would have thought cloning possible? Who would have thought it permissible? Who would have thought it desirable? Who would have thought it moral? Who now comprehends the height and depth of the ethical issues involved?

An arresting counterpart to the somewhat clandestine efforts to clone a human is the grassroots clamor to post the Ten Commandments in public places. A modern quandary is balanced by an ancient moral code.

The question is whether this top ten list of Hebrew wisdom can help negotiate this number one item of contemporary debate.

“Do not covet,” says commandment number ten.

Accumulation is the hallmark of our culture. When this desire to acquire leads us to manipulate life and law, does it move into the arena of this command? Or is cloning a remark-

ably accurate way to keep what is most truly ours, namely, our own DNA?

“Do not kill” is a powerful and persistent rule of civilization. But cloning raises to a higher pitch the argument over when life begins.

“Each of the embryos is a human being simply by dint of its genetic makeup.” So said one church statement. Cloning requires the creation of many embryos before one emerges that suits the parameters of scientific progress. The others are extinguished. Is this murder?

Many contend the chief motive behind the campaign to clone is money. Make no mistake; there is much to be made. This certainly invokes again rule number ten, but it also challenges the one about telling the truth: “Do not bear false witness.” Are those who know telling the truth about the risk to human life as well as the benefits to their bottom line?

One man wants to clone his mother. She is dying much too young, he says. Is this effort to perpetuate her life and legacy done in obedience to the command to “honor parents”? Some will say it is more about Oedipus than about honor.

And then there is rule number one: “Have no other gods before me.”

The charge is made that cloning is “playing God.” It is an old accusation, heard at every turn, from atomic energy to organ transplant, from contraception to euthanasia. It has been used so often it has lost much of its moral punch.

Except for this: the ancient Hebrew prohibition against deities other than Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was directed at the pervasive appeal of fertility goddesses!

Perhaps we are indeed back where we started; perhaps the ancients knew something about life and truth and right and wrong; perhaps it is not something new but something old that needs our attention; perhaps those commandments might look just fine on the wall in the good doctor’s office; perhaps, indeed! ■



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# The Threat of Theocracy?

By John M. Swomley, Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics  
St. Paul School of Theology

The greatest danger to democracy in any nation is theocracy. It can occur in any society where a powerful religious organization or combination of organizations is the decisive voice in a political or judicial system. In spite of our constitutional system of separation of church and state there is substantial evidence of theocratic influence and efforts to control in the United States today.

It is evident in a well-documented alliance of the Republican National Committee under George W. Bush's leadership with the Cardinals and Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, and the silence or collusion of some largely Protestant organizations. This conclusion is based largely on the remarkable investigative reporting by a progressive democratic Roman Catholic organization of the actions of Bush and the Catholic hierarchy of the United States in the Summer 2001 issue of *Conscience*, a journal of Catholics for a Free Choice.

On its cover page is a color picture of five red-clad, smiling Cardinals applauding a smiling George W. Bush in front of the newly dedicated Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington on March 21. The description under the picture is "TOGETHER AT LAST: CONSERVATIVE CATHOLICS AND THE GOP." The word "conservative" should be "right wing," as most dictionaries describe a conservative as one who wants to maintain the status quo or existing system of government. The programs advocated by the new alliance go instead in the direction of extreme or radical change.

The major players in the Republican decision to court influential Catholics were Deal Hudson, a former Baptist minister who converted to Catholicism and subsequently became the publisher of a right-wing Catholic magazine, *Crisis*; Karl Rove, Bush's political advisor; and Richard John Neuhaus, a former Lutheran metamorphosed into a Roman Catholic zealot, who "reportedly tutored Bush in Catholic social teaching." And John Dilulio, "a conservative Catholic criminologist who would become the head of Bush's faith-based effort."<sup>1</sup> Dilulio has since resigned.

In February 1999 the Republican National Committee formed a "Catholic Task Force" to work among Catholics to support Bush for President. Thomas Melady, a former U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, was chairman. It also included Reagan's Secretary of State, Alexander Haig; John Klink, an advisor to the Vatican's United Nations mission; and Peter Flanigan, a trustee of the right-wing John Olin Foundation, among others.

The chair of the Republican National Committee was Jim Nicholson, a Roman Catholic later named to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican. Brian Tierney, a prominent Philadelphia businessman (Tierney Communications) and advisor to Cardinal Bevilacqua, was on the Catholic Task Force formed

to campaign for Bush. He was later largely responsible for putting together a list of three million Catholics for a direct-mail and phone political campaign.

How did Catholic leaders respond to the Republican effort to elect Bush? Archbishop Edward Egan of New York issued a pastoral letter to his flock urging them to vote for candidates "who share our commitment to the fundamental right of the unborn." And just before the election Bush visited Archbishop Bevilacqua, and the Philadelphia archdiocese provided to its 283 parishes 250,000 voter guides prepared by the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops.<sup>2</sup>

During his campaign for the Presidency, Bush met with various prominent Catholics such as Deal Hudson and Father Frank Pavone, head of "Priests for Life," which claims a membership of 13% of the U.S. Catholic priests (6,000 priests). The meeting with Pavone was especially significant, as Pavone represents the far right in anti-abortion action. He endorses clinic blockades and has associated with Operation Rescue leader Randall Terry, and Joseph Scheidler, convicted of violating federal racketeering laws. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia's son Paul is a Roman Catholic priest and a member of Pavone's Priests for Life.<sup>3</sup>

Only a few days after Bush took the oath of office as President, he had dinner with the new Archbishop of Washington, Theodore McCarrick; the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop James Hickey; and the President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bishop Joseph Fiorenza.

Again in January Bush met with 30 Catholic leaders, including Cardinals, wealthy layman Thomas Monaghan of Domino Pizza fame, and various Bishops as well as former Baptist Deal Hudson, to press his case for faith-based social services. At that meeting Bush connected his faith-based initiative to his decision to oppose abortion rights. He said, "Take the life issue, this requires a President and an administration leading our nation to understand the importance of life. This whole faith-based initiative really ties into a larger cultural issue that we're working on . . . because when you're talking about welcoming people of faith to help people who are disadvantaged and are unable to defend themselves, the logical step is also those babies."<sup>4</sup>

The Republican-Catholic alliance has continued unabated into Bush's first year in office. He held a private meeting with Cardinal Law of Boston. Law subsequently said on April 18 that "to be more successful in transforming our culture in the United States it is absolutely essential that we be consistently and unambiguously pro-life."<sup>5</sup>

Bush also arranged his travels so as to meet with key Catholic Bishops: Rigali in St. Louis, Wuerl in Pittsburgh, and of course his meeting in Rome with the Pope in July.

After the election and Bush's Supreme Court "victory," the New Jersey Catholic Bishops in a February letter to Catholic voters said, "We applaud that the majority of Catholic voters in our state cast their ballots for the major party candidate who publicly stated his support for a ban on abortions . . . opposed Medicaid-funded abortions, opposed the sale of the abortion pill RU-486, and voiced his support for parental notification/consent legislation and a ban on late term partial birth abortions."<sup>6</sup>

One of President Bush's early efforts to maintain a high profile among Catholics and the news media they watch and read was his speech on March 22, 2001, at the dedication of the \$50 million Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington. In the July 23, 1997 issue of *The Washington Times*, it is described as "akin to a presidential museum for the Pope" and "part think-tank" to interpret the "Pope's teachings" on issues "such as abortion." The Pope chose Washington rather than Rome or Jerusalem, presumably because he expects the U.S. to continue to be the world's most influential nation.

Looking forward to the next elections was the announcement April 18 by the new Republican National Committee chairman, Jim Gilmore, that there would be a new National Catholic Leadership Forum to begin strategic planning for the next Congressional elections in 2002 and the Presidential election in 2004.<sup>7</sup>

This new National Catholic Leadership Forum met on April 25 with some 350 Catholics present. One of its duties is for key Catholics to participate in a weekly White House conference call on Catholic strategy.

In addition to these and other Republican-Catholic liaisons are Bush's formal appointments to key Administration positions. An article in *Conscience* said, "Bush has named a slew of Catholics to highly visible roles within the White House and key agencies."

One particularly shocking appointment is that of a Vatican insider, Joseph Klink to head the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration instead of Secretary of State Colin Powell's choice of a career State Department official. Klink represents the Vatican's diplomatic mission at the United Nations.

Klink, who holds dual Irish and American citizenship, represents the Vatican at United Nations conferences on social issues and has represented it on the executive board of UNICEF from 1998 to 1999. A *New York Times* account said, "His resume lists his current job as advisor to the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations." It is highly unusual for any government to let the Vatican determine this choice, but the *Times* account said the nomination of Klink "comes at a time when the White House is assiduously courting Roman Catholics, a group President Bush's political advisors believe may be pivotal in the next election." Moreover, in addition to being employed by the Vatican, Klink's resume "also says he is a member of the Republican National Committee's Catholic Task Force."<sup>8</sup>

Right wing groups are expected to support Klink because he is "an advocate for the Vatican's position against family planning and against the use of condoms for protection against HIV infection." He has also opposed "emergency contraceptive pills to some women in refugee camps." The Vatican even opposes emer-

gency contraception for rape victims. It believes in requiring rape victims to accept the rapist's semen and raise the rapist's children. Vatican dogma always trumps a woman's right to control her own body.

Klink is a Vatican loyalist, having been in 17 United Nations Conferences on issues dealing with women and social issues as a member of Vatican delegations. "In the crucial 1994 Cairo Conference" Klink "played an active role as the architect of Vatican strategies and issues" as the delegation's floor manager.<sup>9</sup>

There has been little media questioning of the appropriateness of these dual roles. Catholics for a Free Choice has a strong position opposing Vatican membership in the U.N. since it does not qualify as a nation, and some opposition occurred when Reagan granted diplomatic recognition to the Vatican. Almost nothing has been said about Klink's representing the Vatican and nothing has been said of his dual Irish-American citizenship, but it is easy to imagine what might happen if either of these Irish or Vatican loyalties were in conflict with existing U.S. population or immigration policies. In any event, it is inappropriate for a man with other loyalties to be appointed to a State Department policy position.

In addition to Klink, Bush has surrounded himself with other Catholics such as John Negroponte, Ambassador to the U.N.; Father Robert Sirica, his advisor on the Catholic vote; Anthony Principi, Veterans Affairs Secretary; Mel Martinez, Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development; Tommy Thompson, Secretary of Health and Human Services; and Peter Wehner, White House speech writer, among others.

Do these facts and figures show that the Republican Party has, for all practical purposes, become the Roman Catholic Party in the United States, faithfully pursuing the Catholic agenda? Not necessarily, for *Conscience* has also demonstrated that millions of Catholic laity, including members of Congress, do not accept the right-wing political agenda of the Vatican, the U.S. Bishops, and some of the laity on such issues as contraception, birth control, abortion, and school vouchers, among others. There are, in effect, a number of progressive Catholic organizations, including some organizations of nuns, as well as Catholics For a Free Choice, who do not accept the idea of a Catholic political party or political candidates who are subservient to Vatican leadership. They are well aware that the Vatican is controlled exclusively by a patriarchy led by the only absolute monarch left in the Western world, assisted by his appointed Curia and his secret order, Opus Dei. ■

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1 *Conscience*, Summer, 2001.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *The Village Voice*, May, 2001.

4 *Conscience*.

5 *Origins*, May 3, 2001-an official Catholic documentary service.

6 *Origins*, March 15, 2001.

7 *Conscience*, p. 9.

8 *New York Times*, May 24, 2001.

9 *Ibid.*

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# Freud Or Fraud?

By Charles Wellborn

Professor of Religion Emeritus, Florida State University

Sigmund Freud, the influential psychoanalyst, fled his native Vienna as a Jewish refugee from Nazi persecution in the 1930s and settled in London, where I now live. Recently I visited his London home which has been preserved as a memorial museum. It was an interesting experience. His desk has been kept just as he left it, and in his study is the famous couch, where his patients reclined as they poured out their troubled confessions to him.

Without doubt Freud was one of the significant intellectual figures of the 20th century. In passing, it is interesting to note that three of his grandchildren have made meaningful impacts on modern British culture. Anna Freud was a distinguished psychoanalyst in her own right, Lucian Freud is ranked among major British artists, and Clement Freud was a long-serving Liberal Member of Parliament. The Freuds have continued to be an influential family.

The grandfather, Sigmund, overshadows them all. A younger friend of mine, a university professor, teaches a course in "The Making of the Modern Mind." In that course he calls attention, as others have before him, to three intellectual revolutions which have decisively helped to shape the way modern men and women think. The first of those events was the Copernican revolution, in which the 16th century Polish astronomer displaced the long-held human idea that the earth was the center of the universe and, accordingly, that earth's inhabitants were vastly more important than any other form of life. Copernicus demonstrated that the sun was the center of our solar system and that earth was only one of several planets which revolved around it. He opened up the vista of a vast universe reaching far beyond our own planetary system.

The second great intellectual revolution was initiated by Charles Darwin. Darwinism attacked the traditional religious idea of the instantaneous creation of human beings in the Garden of Eden and sought to replace that idea with the concept of a multi-century evolutionary development which opened up the possibility that human beginnings lay in primordial muck and mire.

In the twentieth century Sigmund Freud precipitated a third intellectual revolution. He opened up a possibility that undermined the whole concept of the individual as a functioning and choosing individual. Moral decisions were not, as Freud understood them, made with any real freedom but were controlled by our reactions to a mysterious force, the Unconscious. Most of our actions were seen as repressions of the power of that force, dictated by the cultural judgments of our surrounding society. And those repressions were the pri-

mary source of psychological illness and instability.

I quickly confess that the preceding paragraph is a superficial and primer book description of Freud's teachings, which are far more intricate and complex than I have indicated here. I must emphasize that in my discussion I am not primarily interested in a theoretical discussion of what Freud actually meant in his work. Nor am I concerned with an academic debate about those teachings. No thinker should be totally judged by how his or her followers and disciples have understood him or her, and I am not competent to judge whether present-day disciples of Freud actually have understood him correctly. Rather, I am concerned with what I choose to call "Freudianism." I mean by that term the popularist versions of Freud's ideas that have permeated and strongly influenced our modern culture. The average man or woman in the street today knows little of what Freud actually taught—and probably cares less; nevertheless, our way of thinking and acting in the modern world has been profoundly influenced by the popular and probably, in many cases, twisted understanding of those teachings.

In a real sense I grew up in the shadow of Freud. As a high school senior I read his *The Interpretation of Dreams* and was deeply impressed. Dreams are mysterious things and of nagging interest, more so to the dreamer than to anyone else. There are few more boring conversational experiences than listening to someone else relate the content of last night's dream. But dreams are puzzles, and puzzles invite solutions. Freud offered a deeply intriguing key to the meaning of my dreams.

As a college student I read more Freud, and my fascination with his work continued. I read with special interest his *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, and I learned from that treatise that, whatever people said, it was not what they really unconsciously meant. Absorbing that idea meant, among other things, that I was able to feel a sense of superiority over most of my fellow human beings for their pathetic lack of self-knowledge.

Freud, of course, spent a great deal of his time talking about sex, which he considered to be the prime driving force in human behavior. As a young college student I was a reasonably virile, healthy male. For me, as for almost all of my fellows, sex in all its aspects was a predominant and absorbing interest. It dominated our conversations and worked its way into our dreams. Under the influence of Freud I saw sex as a mighty river, flowing through dark channels, erupting here and there into daylight, but always returning to underground caverns where it took its unpredictable and amoral course.

Ego, super-ego, and id battled in my imagination, and I was encouraged, as I wanted to be, in the idea that any limitation on the sexual drive was simply an unhealthy “repression.”

Only one of Freud’s major themes gave me difficulty and aroused a degree of skepticism. His famous “Oedipus complex” puzzled me. Freud, using as his metaphor the plot of Sophocles’ Greek drama, taught that every male child has an unconscious sexual longing for his mother and a consequent hostility toward his father, who has usurped that sexual relationship. Try as I might, I could not make that jibe with my own experience. I had never felt any sexual desire, even in my dreams, for my mother, and I had a close and loving relationship with my father. I was as repulsed by the idea of incest as Oedipus himself. In this regard, even at my tender age, I could not make Freud’s teaching fit reality.

Across the years this initial skepticism slowly extended itself to much more in popular Freudianism. For one thing I met, especially in academic circles, persons who had apparently swallowed Freud whole—hook, line, and sinker. Some were even able to make sense of his preposterous hypothetical explanation of the beginning of human society in a violent patricide committed by young apes on their male parent in a contest for the father’s sexual partners.

As a pastor and then a teacher I came into contact with a number of people who had undergone Freudian psychoanalytic treatment. I am sure that some individuals have been helped by such an experience, but I must honestly confess that most of those I encountered seemed to have emerged from their treatment more psychologically crippled, self-obsessed, and incompetent than before.

The British philosopher, Roger Scruton, provides a perceptive analysis of Freudianism. He writes, “Consider the Oedipus complex. The reason why you were so horrified by the thought of sleeping with mum, Freud tells me, is that you wanted to. The strength of your aversion proves the strength of your desire. That’s how the unconscious works.”

Looking at Freud’s teaching in this way helps one to understand what the German thinker, Wittgenstein, called the “charm” of Freud. We are presented with a view of life as seen in an inverse mirror with everything upside down. Scruton goes on to say, “You don’t want to sleep with your mother because you do; you don’t want to kill your father because you do; you don’t want to rape, pillage, murder because you do.

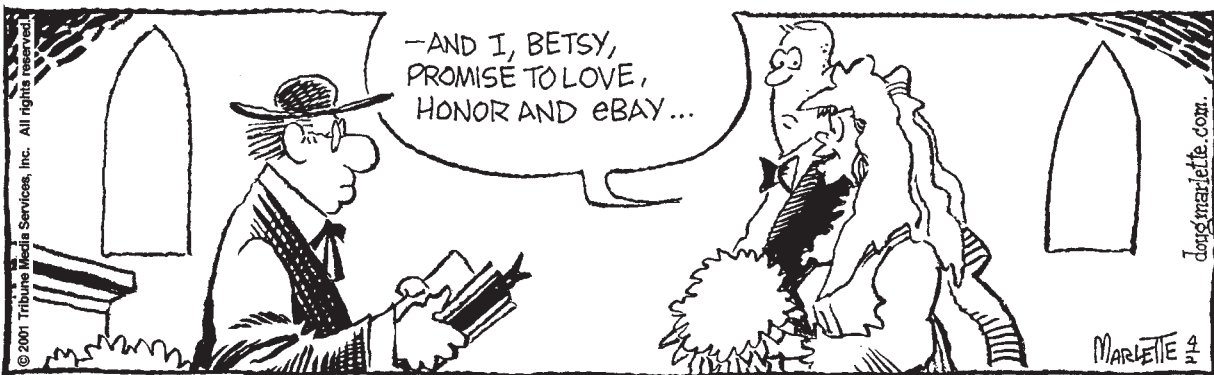
Only the mechanism of ‘repression’ prevents the truth from showing. And maybe we damage ourselves by repressing things; maybe we should let it all hang out, free ourselves from those old taboos and inhibitions, and become what we are.”

Scruton’s comments direct us to the essence of the influence of Freudianism on our modern culture. He uses the word “taboos,” and this is significant. “Repressions” is Freud’s word for the limitations placed in human life upon the impulses of the unconscious. In popular culture “repressions” is translated into “taboos,” and that word carries a heavy load of connotation. “Taboo” carries with it the idea of an irrational ban placed on certain behaviors. The “taboo” is there, not because there is anything intrinsically wrong with a particular act but simply because the current society or culture has forbidden it, for whatever reason. As long as a moral prohibition is viewed as a taboo, many people feel they can disobey it in the name of personal freedom and uninhibited self-expression.

Are taboos merely reflections of meaningless societal prohibitions? I do not think so. Take, for instance, the ancient Greek prohibition of incest—the central issue in Sophocles’ drama. The Greeks had observed across many years the destructive effects of incest on the common interests of a working society. In particular, they had seen the effects of inbreeding on their kings and queens. Their moral aversion to incest, along with their condemnation of the other major sin in their moral hierarchy, patricide, was not a passing cultural phenomenon. It was based on solid experiential evidence.

In a similar fashion, look at the Old Testament Ten Commandments. Christians believe that these moral injunctions were God-given, but that does rule out the judgment, not contradictory but complementary, that acts like murder, theft, adultery, and false witness—condemned by the Decalogue—were judged by long experience as serious aberrations in the structure of communal human life. No society can survive for long without such prohibitions. That is the lesson of history and experience.

Of course, it is in the area of sexual behavior that Freudianism has exercised its greatest influence. Freud was virtually obsessed with the human sexual drive, which he saw as the prime mover in human behavior. I am inclined to say (and I realize that some other students in this field will not agree with me here) that the Freudian view of human life is basically an “adolescent” one. I base that observation on the fact that



I can well remember a time in my life when the over-active behavior of my glands was a dominant influence in my life and in my moral decisions. Hopefully, however, I have matured a bit since those days. But unbridled and uncontrolled (“unrepressed?”) sexual behavior continually produces its tragic consequences in everyday human experience. Too many men and women act sexually in adolescent fashion long after they have reached later years.

The sexual behavior of some supposedly responsible adults is, to be honest, beyond my rational comprehension. Why, to use one all-too-prominent example, would a president of the United States, holder of the most powerful office on earth, choose to jeopardize his position and his reputation for the sake of a few minutes of sexual titillation in the Oval Office? It defies understanding. Across the years I have witnessed the sorry sight of preachers, evangelists, pastors, politicians, business men and women, and a host of ordinary people destroy everything that was presumably valuable to them in exchange for transient sexual experiences. I do not for a moment condone the promiscuous activities of inexperienced teen-agers, but I find their behavior far easier to understand than that of supposedly responsible adults—individuals, quite simply, who have never grown up. The “spin doctors” of advertising understand this and seek to sell everything from toothpaste to coffee with commercials involving sexual situations and innuendo.

Recently I attended a performance of a seldom-produced Noel Coward play called *Semi-Monde*. The play is virtually plotless. Instead, a large cast of actors and actresses (28 in all, I think) portray a constantly changing parade of meaningless, superficial, manipulative, and destructive sexual encounters and liaisons, both heterosexual and homosexual. The setting is upper class Britain in the 1920s, but there is a universal atmosphere to it. In no case was there any attempt to portray love in terms of personal commitment or devotion. The trademark of Coward’s wit and cleverness is clearly set on the dialogue and action, but there is, I think, a sub-text. Coward was under no illusions as to the ultimate meaning and results of what he was dramatically portraying. I must admit that during the performance I laughed a lot, but I finally went away from that experience with a sour taste in my mouth. Coward had cut painfully close to human reality.

Freud was certainly correct in identifying the sexual drive as a prime motivating factor in human behavior, both for good and for evil. Where I think he was deficient was in his ignoring other equally powerful drives. The lust for power—the desire to use and manipulate other human beings for one’s own selfish purposes—is as potent an aphrodisiac as sex for many people. To use obvious historical examples, I do not think one can adequately explain great villains like Hitler and Stalin primarily in terms of sex. The lust for power was at work.

Equally as powerful is the desire for material possessions. Certainly, the lust for power plays an important part here, but our current society is so obsessed with the desire for material gain that it tends to overshadow almost everything else. The nation wide involvement in the stock market, for instance, is for most people who are far from expert, a kind of gambling

game or lottery in which the lucky winners reap monetary gains which can then be spent in a consumer-oriented and market-manipulated economy.

If, however, we grant for the moment that Freud’s ideas about human sexuality, as popularly understood, are correct, what does this say about morals? What is clear is that Freudianism offers a uniquely subversive morality, wrapped in scientific jargon. For instance, he asks us to see children as innately sexual beings from the moment of birth, engaged, as Scruton says, “in strategies of seduction, and whose unconscious thoughts are constantly directed to their sexual parts.” Freud’s understanding of sexual desire mirrors this understanding. Such desire, according to Freud, arises from the “libido”—an instinctive and amoral force—that focuses on the “erotogenous zones.” The normal “sexual aim” is “union of the genitals in the act known as copulation which leads to a release of sexual tension and a temporary extinction of the sexual instinct—a satisfaction analogous to the satisfaction of hunger.” From this perspective sex should be handled in the same way as hunger. If one is hungry, one eats. If one is sexually stimulated, one seeks to achieve copulation. In such a picture there is no room for personal love or commitment. There is only an obsession with the genitals.

Freud attributed sexual desire to children from the moment of birth. It is Freudian orthodoxy to think of children, however young and immature, as sexual beings. Their sexual feelings are malleable and can flow in any direction. Any limitation on those feelings, such as the teaching of the moral virtue of chastity, is merely irrational “repression.” The protective wall that parents and society have traditionally erected around the innocence (a meaningless term in Freudianism) of children is nothing more than a meaningless taboo.

In contrast to this view, traditional morality—both Christian and secular—has applied a strong dose of common sense to sexual expression. The purpose of moral education, it has believed, is to delay sexual activity until the age when it could be integrated into a responsible life. From this perspective sex cannot be isolated from other areas of normal life. There are many arenas in which we feel justified in limiting participation to individuals who have achieved some degree of maturity. We do not, for instance, allow people to vote until they are 18 years of age. Which requires more maturity and judgment in terms of consequences—voting or having sex?

I am not arguing here for a hedge of legal restrictions around sexual behavior. The attempt to regulate private sexuality by legal prohibition, except in extreme criminal instances such as rape, has proved to be almost totally ineffective. What is required is much more fundamental. We badly need substantial moral teaching of the young and an inculcation of moral values. Sex education in the public schools is necessary, but it must go beyond biological instruction and guidance in birth control. This does not mean an invasion of the public school curriculum by Christian instruction, which would violate the important idea of the separation of church and state. There is ample moral teaching that is shared by Christians,



those of other faiths, and, indeed, secularists to form the basis of a solid instruction in sexual responsibility.

The intention of the almost universally shared agreement in this area is, as I understand it, to unite sexual expression with mature adult personal commitment, indeed to make it part of the enormously important existential commitment of marriage. If the sexual drive is as strong as Freudianism pictures it, it becomes even more important that it be consummated by responsible adults, rather than as a thoughtless game by immature adolescents, whatever their calendar age may be.

It is not hard to see the concrete effects of a Freudian view of humanity in our current society. The enormous increase in teen-age pregnancy, the escalating rate of abortion, the decline in the number of lasting marriages, the increasing number of people who are psychologically wounded by unhappy sexual experiences—can these be explained in any other way than by the popular influence of a philosophy that in effect teaches that the orgasm is the be-all and end-all of human experience, to be achieved at any cost, regardless of the effect on other human beings?

To quote Professor Scruton once again, “In place of integration we now have disintegration, and in place of the mature desire between adults the genital obsessions of corrupted kids.” Popular Freudianism has elevated individual freedom in the sexual arena to a paramount value. As the oft-heard slogan has it, “If it feels good, do it.”

I am a strong supporter of the value of personal freedom, but I also realize that my own freedom extends only so far as it does not impinge upon or limit the freedom of others. In the familiar words of John Donne, “No man is an island.” Whether we like it or not, we all live in a community. What adversely affects the welfare of that community eventually adversely affects us all. In exactly the same way that there cannot be moral anarchy in the worlds of government, business, labor, or any of the other important arenas of human life, there most certainly cannot be such amoral irresponsibility in the important realm of sexual behavior.

Morally speaking, I believe we live in a crisis age. Sigmund Freud is not entirely responsible for that situation, but he must share his part of the blame. ■

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## ENDNOTES

1. Roger Scruton, *The London Times*, April 8, 2001. For the benefit of any readers who are familiar with the other works of Professor Scruton, I must point out that I disagree profoundly with most of his philosophical and theological propositions, but I find his analysis of Freud perceptive.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

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# Musings on Education

By Ralph Lynn, Professor of History *ret.*  
Baylor University

**Editor's Note:** Ralph Lynn is a regular columnist for the Waco-Tribune Herald, in which these articles first appeared. At age 91, his pen and mind remain keenly sharp.

## Losing the Mind of the World

Fifty or so years ago, the Lebanese statesman and Eastern Orthodox Christian leader, Charles Malik, gave the entire Christian world a solemn assessment and a warning foresight of its possible future.

“If you win the whole world and lose the mind of the world, you will soon discover that you have not won the world.”

How was it possible that a man in his situation could (as I think) understand so perceptively the situation of the entire Christian world? And what do his words really mean?

Probably an answer would have to begin with the fact that the Middle East and Lebanon itself, in our time so beset by the apparently endless disorder of war, were then enjoying a time of relative peace and prosperity. Lebanon's capital city, Beirut, was known as the Paris of the Middle East.

Living in this remarkable Westernized little nation far from the world power centers but operating on the world stage as a statesman in both politics and religion, Malik may have been granted a perspective and an insight denied to prominent religious leaders in Europe, Britain, and the United States.

“Winning the world” is obviously a phrase which will resonate appealingly to Westerners—especially to those in the United States associated with mission-minded evangelistic denominations.

This phrase is still used, but not with the confident enthusiasm of an earlier time. Now, adults are seldom “converted.” Now, to increase church membership, the church members in most groups—aside from Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Pentecostals—would have to have larger families.

On the world scene, a seldom mentioned fact is that Christian missions have never been markedly successful save in Latin America and Africa. We have never won significant percentages of the populations of nations which have literate leaders and long and proud histories such as Japan and China.

An admirable *Washington Post Weekly* article (May 14-20, 2001), “Europe's Faithful Few,” supports this general but fairly accurate picture. Its authors, *Washington Post* Foreign Service reporter, T.R. Reid, assisted by *Post* Special Correspondent Adi Bloom, furnish some similarly discouraging specifics.

- A recent Sunday Morning Prayer in Canterbury cathedral drew 13 people. The midday communion drew about

300—including “the choir boys and a phalanx of tourists armed with video cameras.”

- In Britain and France, less than 10 percent attend church as often as once a month.
- In Scandinavia the churches attract less than 3 percent of the population.
- In Amsterdam the Dutch Reformed hierarchy is converting churches into luxury apartments to pay its bills.
- Burial services are the only church rites called for by the masses of people.
- Dutch sociologist Nan Kirk de Graaf observes of the general European population: “one of the least religious in the world.” She thinks that the rise of science has “caused people to lose faith. They become unbelievers and leave the church.”

Another quotation from de Graaf—to me the most frightening comment I know about: “The more parents read, the more likely it is that the child will leave the Church.” If the picture presented here is reasonably accurate, it may be logical to offer the following conclusions:

First, we have not only failed to win the world but we are in imminent danger of losing the mind of the world.

Second, we need to come to terms with the realities. Too many religious leaders share the incredible, complacent, mindless optimism of the British Canon Chandler quoted in the *Post* article. “The British census of 1851 showed that half the population didn’t go to church. We’re below that now, but we can definitely come back, as we have before.”

Third, leaders in religion need to realize that our world is not at all the world our fathers knew. It is increasingly mobile, increasingly affluent, increasingly educated, increasingly homogeneous, increasingly urban, increasingly multi-cultural, increasingly science-dominated, and increasingly secular.

I must offer a constructive suggestion: we need to create a religious atmosphere in which parents who read—and their children—will feel comfortable.

## No Child Left Behind

Our current president’s oft-repeated campaign slogan, “No child left behind,” seems sadly hollow when one consid-

ers the realities of the nation’s public schools.

Since the Texas population is much like California’s except for California’s greater ethnic varieties, a recent appraisal of that state’s situation is also a reasonably accurate description of the school scene not just in Texas but in other states also.

What are some of its findings? What remedies are now being suggested? Do these remedies offer any hope of success? What of the future:

- Schools scoring in the lower brackets are overwhelmingly those with very high numbers of nonwhite, economically poor students whose native languages are not English.
- Poorly performing schools are significantly larger, with more crowded facilities, and are more likely to have non-credentialed teachers.
- Ninety-four percent of students with the lowest 10 percent of test scores are economically poor while just 7 percent of students in the highest scoring schools are economically poor.
- Only 4.2 percent of the students in schools with the lowest scores are white, while 71 percent of the students in the highest-performing schools are white.
- Despite the fact that the managers of schools which do poorly on tests try to test only their better students, the test score gaps are widening.

What remedies have been suggested and—sometimes—implemented?

Studies of academic standards and teaching methods are popular. There is much talk of reducing class sizes—especially on the elementary levels. More and more effective testing appears on most reform programs as well as more teacher training with emphasis on rewards for the better teachers and penalties for the others.

I think that we have been trying these “remedies” for a generation or two. Perhaps we keep trying them to kid ourselves that we, the responsible, are doing our part but that irresponsible parents, poor teachers, and lazy students are, at bottom, responsible for school failures.

Perhaps we do not realize that we are talking about millions of children “left behind.” Perhaps we realize that schools can only reflect the society which maintains them. If this is so, we must make our total society more equitable if we really wish to leave no child behind.

Perhaps we do not realize that it would probably be cheap-



er in the long run to do the necessary restructuring of our society than to allow these millions of children to be left behind.

Short of the restructuring from which nearly all of us shrink, perhaps only one course of action is feasible: We need to allot all of the available public school funds we have on a per capita student basis regardless of the tax base of each school district.

Even this would be inadequate. Failing schools could be helped if, with high salaries and good facilities, we could bribe our best teachers to leave the affluent districts to work in areas so undesirable. But this is too idealistic.

The hollowness of our president's slogan merely reflects the hollowness of most of us—leaders and people.

Perhaps we will get serious about solutions only when we are sufficiently frightened by the harvest we will reap from our past and present refusals to deal realistically with real problems.

## Is Home Schooling Indoctrination?

The jury on home-schooling will be out until somebody compiles an adequately lengthy and scientifically selected list of home-school people together with an objective appraisal of their adult records.

In the meantime, we might ask some questions and make the best guesses we can about the wisdom (or lack thereof) of this current movement in education.

First, what is meant by "education" in this essay?

Second, is education the right term for (probably) a high percent of what seems to be going on in home-schooling?

Third, will this type of education extend beyond high schools?

*On the definition of education:* Let us agree that all parents engaged in home-schooling are aware that their children must attain some degree of mastery of the testable, measurable subjects familiar to some degree to the general run of adults.

The three R's with geography and history come to mind. Children also need some exposure to the worlds of traditional music and the graphic arts.

Obviously, parents must prepare their children for timely advancement up the educational ladder. But parents must be

alert enough and honest enough to prepare their children for the job market if they have neither the ability nor the inclination to profit from schooling.

*On the question: Is education the right term for (probably) much of home-schooling?*

Far more important matters than the readily testable subjects are far more difficult to teach and measure.

Are the students learning to grant to people of other races the same human values they claim for themselves?

Are they ready to grant to people from whom they differ on social, economic, scientific, or religious questions the same possibility of being correct they assume for themselves?

Are they learning to analyze and evaluate what they read and hear, to question attitudes they have learned to approve without examination?

Are the parents teaching their children that they may need to develop the self-discipline to live on a low standard of living for a while in order to earn either the money or the education to do better?

In short, are parents educating or indoctrinating their children?

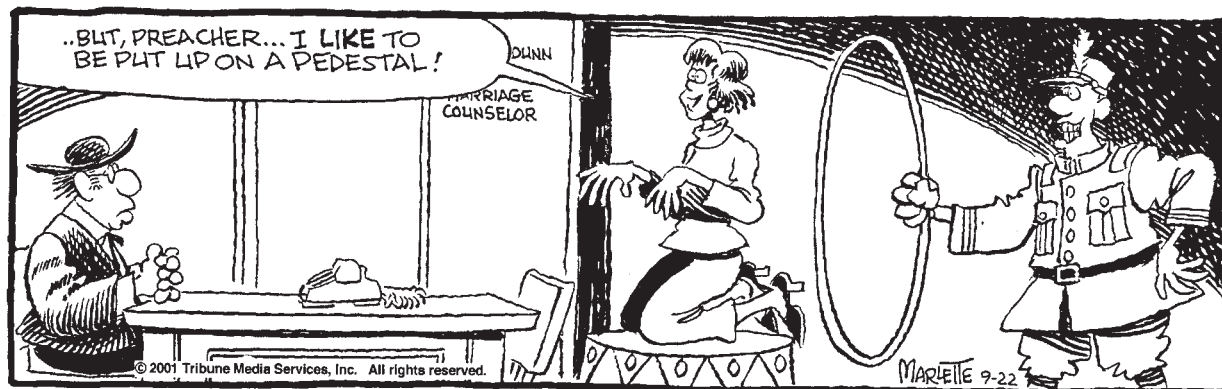
Finally, *will this type of education continue beyond public school years?* Quite naturally, an uncertain percentage of parents have been sending their home-schooled students to evangelical colleges, but fear is spreading that even these colleges may be on the slippery slope to secularism so familiar in our academic history.

To stem this tide, Michael Farris, a radically conservative lawyer, preacher, and champion of Pat Robertson, is busy establishing Patrick Henry College in Virginia.

At this staunchly conservative religious school-political party boot camp, dating ("serial infidelity") will be prohibited, students will study evolution only to be able to refute it, and Christian lawyers will be produced—many of whom, Farris hopes, will begin to influence public policy as congressional staffers.

Gracious (or words to that effect)!

Will this movement spread, how long will it last, and when will these carefully protected young people be allowed to enter the real world? ■



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# Preacher Behave: Handbook of Ministerial Ethics, 6th ed. Revised

J. Clark Hensley, P.O. Box 1135, Clinton, MS 39060, \$12

*Book Review by Jack Glaze, ret.*

Missionary and Professor in Argentina, Mississippi College, NOBTS

Since 1978 over 30,000 copies of Hensley's insightful book *Ministerial Ethics*, manners and methods have been printed. The revised sixth edition is more generic in approach and serves as an effective handbook for ministers in general, not just preachers. The well organized book is practical, informative and easy to read, it contains biblical admonitions and beneficial suggestions for both ministerial staff and congregations.

Hensley is well prepared for the task undertaken: he has a ThD from Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, has served twenty eight years as a pastor, and forty years in denominational leadership positions including Metro Mission, Executive Director Christian Action Commission, and Family Ministry Program Consultant, Mississippi Baptist Convention. Although retired, he remains a minister's pastor. Wisdom gleaned through years of personal Christian growth, academia, ecclesiastical experience, and counseling has honed his ethical concerns for responsible action on the part of a Christian minister in his family, church, and community setting.

Ministerial ethics relates to the total person in all of life's circumstances, consequently, the book is organized as follows; a beginning Preface and Rationale, the Minister's Family, Health and Integrity; the Minister's relationship with Church Members, the Minister's responsibility in Worship and Fellowship and in Care-giving, with other Staff Members, and with a broader Community of Faith; additionally, ministerial ethics and practices are discussed in relationship to the Wedding, the Funeral, and What's in a Name?; a concluding Epilogue (How Church Members Should Behave to be the Minister's Friend) summarizes and illustrates previously discussed principles. Basically, the new additions are found in the Rational and Epilogue.

Dr. W.W. Walley, M.D., a dedicated Christian, with more than fifty years of private medical practice wrote: "I believe that a man who is truly God-called for a specific task is virtually indestructible until the task is completed or the person strays from his calling. This, however, does not preclude sick-

ness or suffering which comes from abusing our bodies." Subsequently, Dr. Walley addresses the topics of Foodaholics, Workaholics, Worry, Fasting, Relax, and Exercise, to which an addendum is added, The Minister and Vacations.

The book is replete with sound counsel: "Confidential is confidential. Counseling secrets are kept just that. . . . What about the ethics of questioning the integrity of some other minister or other church member? . . . It is very unfortunate that preachers have a bad reputation about paying their debts. . . . Covetousness may be the preacher's most besetting sin. . . some may covet other ministers' churches, . . . buildings. . . staff. Only a few covet other men's money, but they may covet other churches' members. . . . How one relates ethically to his church family as to time may govern competency in the task." In the Epilogue Hensley deals with both congregational and personal ethics relating to pastoral health and ministry.

Christian conversion results in a cultural change. Consequently, eternal biblical principles should precede and govern social practice in evangelism, missions and ethics. When commonly accepted practices are canonized as principles, contemporary culture has triumphed over Christ. For example, the Christian gospel proclaimed requires a personal experience with Christ, a principle; however, error has crept in when an individual personal experience, a practice, is proclaimed as the Gospel. Hensley's handbook supplements biblically based ethical principles with helpful and frequently enumerated procedures. For him, a Christian ethicist, biblical principles precede cultural practice.

*Preacher Behave-Revised* is recommended as a valuable introduction for ministerial students; additionally, all ministers will find it helpful. In a day when ministerial ethical standards are frequently questioned by a secular society, the book could be used wisely as a basis for dialogue at Christian fellowships and retreats. An emphasis on ministerial ethics, manners, and methods could help renew a sense of mutual responsibility among ministers and congregations for attitudes and actions that are consistent with the teachings of Christ. ■

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# Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews<sup>1</sup>

*James Carroll, Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000*

*Book Review by Paul J. Piccard, Professor Emeritus of Political Science,  
Florida State University*

This powerful and disturbing book records and analyzes the long history of how Christians, especially Roman Catholics, have dealt with Jews. The work is both scholarly and very personal.

Carroll starts and ends an examination of his Church and Jews with the Cross at Oswiecim [Auschwitz] and Edith Stein<sup>2</sup>. He starts his personal experience with the discovery that a childhood friend is a Jew and ends with his own children at the site of Hitler's suicide bunker. He describes a virtual Oedipal relationship with his parents and his discovery of history that his Paulist seminary classes omitted.

The central theme of the book is that Christians took anti-Semitic forks in the road when they might well have written a less tragic history by following the other road. Carroll depicts Christian attitudes towards Jews as grudging acceptance at best, a general hostility, and a long series of atrocities culminating in the shoah—Hitler's "final solution."

Carroll traces the reluctant acceptance of Jews to Saint Augustine. Augustine's opposition to Jews was manifest, but he did not advocate killing them. They and their tradition provided Christianity with prophecies that proved the divinity of Christ. Carroll summarizes Augustine's position as, "Let them survive, but not thrive!"

As for Jesus fulfilling Old Testament prophecies: Carroll distinguishes "prophecy historicized" from "history remembered." He touches a sensitive nerve. Christians make a major issue of the fulfillment of incidental prophecies (for example, the seamless robe), while rationalizing the failure of the great prophecy that the Messiah would usher in a new age of peace. Carroll says, in effect, that early Christians reified selected prophecies as a way of "proving" that Jesus was the Messiah.

Augustine's was a moderate response to Ambrose and Saint John Chrysostom, Bishop of Antioch. Rosemary Radford Ruether, quoted by Carroll, termed the Bishop's views "easily the most violent and tasteless of the anti-Judaic literature of the period." Christian hostility in a later era is illustrated by Martin Luther<sup>3</sup> and the Roman Catholic priest, Father Leonard Feeney.<sup>4</sup>

Polemical denunciation of Jews strikes Carroll as bad in itself but he links it to the sporadic outbreak of physical violence, lynching, and pogroms. He picks out examples: in Alexandria in 414; later crusaders running amok in the Rhineland (they could not wait until they reached the Holy Land to start the killing); in 14th century Spain; again in the Rhineland in the early 19th century; and climaxing for now

with the Nazis. Carroll never holds the anti-Jewish views of the Church directly responsible for the atrocities. He sees clerical anti-Jewish expressions rather as enablers.

Carroll objects to supersessionism, arguing instead in favor of Judaism and Christianity—Christianity in addition to Judaism not in its place. Carroll likes that rascal Peter Abelard for his Christology (not for seducing his young pupil) and Emile Zola for his defense of Alfred Dreyfus.<sup>5</sup> Some of the heroes of the early church (including the author of John's Gospel)<sup>6</sup> do not fare as well in Carroll's view.

Carroll condemns the 19th century doctrine of papal infallibility without mentioning the roughly contemporaneous rise of Fundamentalist inerrantism. Carroll also denies that individuals can become infallible by reading the Bible. Carroll says the Church made the Bible, not vice versa, and he construes the Bible as the product of its times. The New Testament, he sees, as the work of the second generation of Christians, not to be accepted at face value. He doubts that Jesus raged against the money changers at the Temple. The Resurrection becomes symbolic and Thomas—well, Carroll does not deign to debunk the story of Thomas' hands in the wounds. As for the True Cross and the Seamless Robe—forget it.

Like many other Christians, Carroll faces the problem of jettisoning superstition while keeping the faith.

Regarding the papacy, Carroll sees a mixed record. Popes have generally opposed violence against Jews, but they have often been hostile. While some locked the ghetto gates, others opened them at least temporarily. Of the recent Popes, Carroll is very hard on Pius XII (who excommunicated Communists wholesale but not Nazis), fuzzy warm on John XXIII (who gets credit for a more favorable view of Judaism than had prevailed), and ambivalent on John Paul II.

Carroll gives John Paul high marks for seeking reconciliation with Jews and especially for praying at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. But Carroll thinks the Pope has not gone far enough and Carroll has little patience with the Pope's view that Catholic individuals, not the Church, are responsible for anti-Jewish crimes. (If bad things were done by people not by the Church, who did the good things?) Carroll is disturbed by the Pope's canonization of Edith Stein and appalled at the prospect of sainthood for Pius XII. Carroll also objects to the Pope's authoritarian claims.

Carroll tries valiantly to point to a better way for his Church by calling for a new Church council. He advocates an

inclusive, democratic conclave that could “take up the unfinished questions . . . of power (Constantine, Ambrose, Augustine), of Christology (Crusades, Anselm, Abelard) of Church intolerance (Inquisition, Nicolaus of Cusa, the ghetto), of democracy (Enlightenment, Spinoza, modernism), and only then of repentance (Holocaust, silence, Edith Stein).” Don Quixote may have been more “practical” than Carroll, but if the Holy Spirit can give the Church Pope John XXIII in the twentieth century, who knows what it may produce in this?

So what about Constantine’s sword? It seems the old boy had a vision before the battle at Milvian Bridge in the year 312 on his way to conquer Rome. He saw a cross in the sky with the promise that by the sign of the cross he would triumph. A cross was then formed with a spear for the length, and a sword perhaps, for the arms. With this standard he won the battle. Constantine became a Christian and thus joined church and state. As Dante has the Lombard spirit Marco say, “sword and shepherd’s crook . . . go badly with each other.”<sup>8</sup>

Carroll’s account of the Church and Jews is a chronicle of atrocities and missed opportunities. It is also a warning against intolerance clothed in the garments of “the truth.” ■

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1 The book contains 616 pages of text and 140 pages of notes, bibliography, and index.

2 Canonized by Pope John Paul II as Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

3 Carroll damns Luther simply by quoting his anti-Semitic vitriol.

4 Father Feeney, a very visible twentieth century anti-Semite, was excommunicated, although Carroll points out that he “had Saint Thomas Aquinas, logic, and exactly 650 years of church history on his side.”

5 For those interested in *Constantine’s Sword* but intimidated by its scope, I suggest starting with Chapter 44, “Alfred Dreyfus and *La Croix*.”

6 Carroll sides with those who argue that John was written late in the first century.

7 In our time we have softened the word *ghetto* to include informal segregation, but the Popes dealt with harsh legal ones—walled and gated.

8 Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy: II Purgatory* trans. into blank verse by Louis Biancolli (New York: Washington Square Press, 1966). 67.

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## Cars. Cars. Cars.

*By Foy Valentine, Founding Editor*

No country on earth has had a more torrid love affair with cars than America.

My own infatuation with the genre, however, has been somewhat fickle.

In 1925 when I was two years old, my Daddy bought a brand new 1925 Model T Ford. He paid \$439.69 for it according to the receipt which I still have, with the charges broken down: \$355 for the “Ford Touring” car itself, \$63.90 for freight, \$17.40 for tax, and \$3.39 for nine gallons of gas and six quarts of oil. This car was just a normal part of my early childhood until the Great Depression. We sold it in 1930 without fanfare when we could no longer buy gasoline for it. Don’t cry for the Model T, Argentina. Life went on.

A few years later our family bought a 1935 Ford sedan, which I, as a teenager, neither wrecked nor killed myself in. It is best remembered for its simple utilitarian purposes: hauling tomatoes into town to the market, transporting our family to and from church services, and, with my older brother driving, carrying me and my small suitcase off to Baylor to start to college in 1940. I attach no stars or streamers, bells or whistles to it, although the car did have some saving graces, which ought not now to be denied or denigrated or basely forgotten.

In late 1944 I was called to be pastor of the Baptist church at Golden, some 120 miles from Fort Worth where I had launched into a five-year program of seminary studies. Fate, and I suppose a bit of hard luck, brought into my life at this time a 1937 Dodge sedan, which used-machine I employed to go back and forth between Fort Worth and that wonderful church field in East Texas. Here this plot begins to thicken.

W.F. Howard at that time was head of Baptist student work for Texas Baptists, and he wanted to put a youth revival team to work across the state so as to try to spread abroad some of the remarkable revival stirrings that had begun at Baylor in Waco. I was chosen as one of the two preachers for that first youth revival team of five. The aforementioned Dodge may well have been a factor in that choosing and definitely was a major player in that hot summer of 1945. The car was big, it had a large trunk, and it gave some promise of being able to waltz across Texas for eleven revivals in eleven weeks. So it did—from Galveston to Breckenridge, from Texarkana to Harlingen, and from Ennis to Sulphur Springs with five (5) people and all of our paraphernalia. The load was heavy, however, and the old car resisted the burden. It often overheated, hence its name, the Van Zandt County Fireball.

But the saga proceeds and the plot further thickens.

I also used this old Dodge to shuttle back and forth from Fort Worth to Houston to see Mary Louise. I had proposed

marriage to her on our second date, having postponed this momentous matter as long as I could have reasonably been expected to drag it out and wait around one bit longer. In spite of weekly drives from Fort Worth to Houston, it took her an agonizing two years to say "Yes." Hasty decisions have never been her long suit. But the old Dodge was, again, a major player in my successful courtship of this lovely young woman who became my wife.

In the fullness of time, the Van Zandt County Fireball, bless its sainted memory, was traded in for a new 1947 Plymouth, for "to everything there is a season." In short order that car was traded in for a new Chevrolet. Then there was another trade for another new Chevrolet. Then quite soon there was a new Buick. In fact, I traded cars so fast and furiously in those halcyon days of my callow youth that my excesses put a not inconsiderable strain on the happy marriage that Mary Louise and I were beginning to negotiate. With four children and the help of Baptists firmly committed to keeping preachers poor if not humble, however, I came off that new car-buying binge. Cold turkey! By 2001, I had not bought a new car in 17 years. This latter day excessiveness, negatively calculated, once again put a not inconsiderable strain on the aforementioned happy marriage which by this time had endured for 54 years

One evening a couple of months ago in rather uncharacteristic huffiness, Mary Louise shared with good friends over an unfriendly game of Scrabble, "Foy is NEVER going to buy a new car." I had no earthly idea she cared. So I went out the next day and bought a new car. You can't imagine how cars have changed in the last 17 years: automatic transmissions, air conditioning, power windows, power seats, thermostats, CDs, variable speed windshield wipers, tinted glass, and other accoutrements remaining to be explained or even discovered.

But please don't go away yet. There is a *piece de resistance* yet to come. Along the way yet another car came into my life. And as Robert Frost said in the closing line of *The Road Not Taken*, "That has made all the difference."

The year was 1960. I had built a cabin in 1958 at 9500 feet altitude in a blue spruce valley about 20 feet from a rushing mountain stream at Red River, New Mexico. Now, honestly, I've never really been much for coveting things. I must confess, however, that I developed a downright prurient craving for

some sort of old four-wheel drive vehicle that would be happy in that special Rocky Mountain environment.

My Red River friend, Mont Dalton, found one in a barn near his ranch in Chattanooga, Oklahoma. It was a 1946 Willys Jeep painted a bright turquoise over the original coat of army green, with fine yellow wheels. The owner was willing to part with it for \$350. My friend shook hands with the owner and towed it 400 miles to Red River where I lovingly embraced it, pressed it to my bosom (it didn't have a top), and adopted it into my family as one of our very own natural-born children.

I built a small shed for it, put new tires on it (they are still on it, of course, for it has been only 41 years), became accustomed to its idiosyncrasies (such as turning on the ignition by pulling the switch labeled "Lights"), and proceeded to haul children and friends up and down old gold mining roads, through uncounted mountain streams, around hair-raising switch-backs, and through fantastic adventures which were more fun than Training Union and Deacons' Meetings put together.

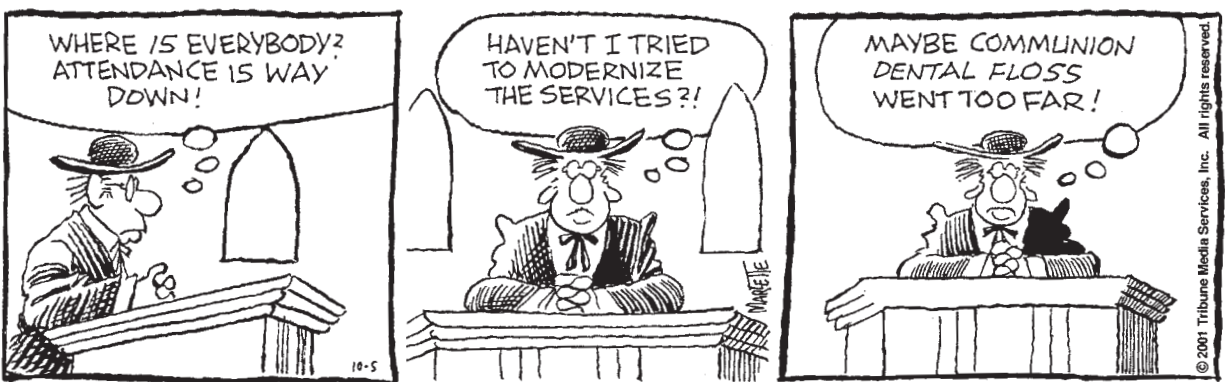
From this old Jeep we have seen elk, bear, deer, bighorn sheep, badgers, coyotes, wolves, and once a big mountain lion slinking furtively across the trail right in front of us. We have seen choke cherries, wild raspberries, mountain strawberries, gooseberries, and blueberries. And we have driven up on patches of delicate irises, clumps of exquisite columbines, meadows full of deep purple gentians, brilliant purple asters, colonies of daisies in full bloom, fields of butter-and-eggs which any self-respecting florist would fight for, and breathtakingly beautiful mountainsides of great quaking aspens in their frost-blessed garments of solid gold.

When we offered to give the cabin to our youngest daughter on her fortieth birthday with all the rights and privileges and heartaches appertaining thereto, she readily accepted the gift on the condition that the Jeep go with it.

And so it did. It continues to start every year after having been left for the winter in temperature dropping to 40 degrees below zero, as it has for 41 years. A thing of beauty and a joy forever.

If you even start to think them not lovely, then pause for a little while and consider what life would be like without cars.

Cars. Cars. Cars. Long live cars. ■



# CHRISTIAN ETHICS TODAY

## A Journal of Christian Ethics

"We need now to recover the prophethood of all believers, matching our zeal for the priesthood of all believers with a passion for the prophethood of all believers."  
—Foy Valentine, Founding Editor

### MISSION

The Christian Ethics Today Foundation publishes *Christian Ethics Today* in order to provide laypersons, educators, and ministers with a resource for understanding and responding in a faithful Christian manner to moral and ethical issues that are of concern to contemporary Christians, to the church, and to society.

### PURPOSES

- Maintain an independent prophetic voice for Christian social ethics
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- Support Christian ecumenism by seeking contributors and readers from various denominations and churches
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- Address readers at the personal and emotional as well as the intellectual level by including in the Journal narratives, poetry, and cartoons as well as essays
- Strengthen and support the cause of Christian ethics

*Christian Ethics Today* was born in the mind and heart of Foy Valentine, as an integral part of his dream for a Center for Christian Ethics. In his words, the purpose of the Journal was "to inform, inspire, and unify a lively company of individuals and organizations interested in working for personal morality and public righteousness."

When the Center was transferred to Baylor University in June 2000, with the calling of a permanent Director, the disbanding Board voted to continue the publication of *Christian Ethics Today*, appointing a new editor and a new Board. The Journal will continue to be published six times per year.

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